



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Palestinian, Israeli Delegations End Talks in Cairo

Shahaq, Sha'th Express Satisfaction

TA2302165594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] The talks between the Israeli and Palestinian delegations in Cairo have ended. Amnon Shahaq and Nabil Sha'th, heads of the two delegations, expressed satisfaction with the progress made in the current round of talks and expect further progress to be made when they meet again in Cairo next week.

Our correspondent Karmela Menahe reports the delegations discussed three main issues: security problems, the transfer of civilian powers, and what is known as confidence-building measures such as the release of prisoners. The delegations also discussed the preparations for and the size of the Palestinian police force. The Civilian Affairs Committee discussed archaeological issues, the electronic media, and land and population registration.

Joint Press Statement Issued

NC2302192094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 23 Feb (MENA)—The Palestinian and Israeli delegations headed by Dr. Nabil Sha'th and Major General Amnon Shahaq have announced that their talks in Cairo on 21-23 February involved constructive work and promoted mutual respect and trust.

In a joint press statement, the first to be issued on the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations concerning ways to implement autonomy in Gaza and Jericho, the two delegations said they discussed three major issues during their committee meetings. They discussed the Security Committee, the Civilian Affairs Committee, and the Detainees Committee.

The statement said that regarding security issues, the two delegations focused on security measures in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho areas, the planning, size, and deployment of Palestinian security forces, and some other related issues.

The statement added that the Security Committee discussed historical sites, communications, land registration, and civil registration.

The statement cited the two delegation heads saying they were satisfied with the progress made during this round and had hopes of making further progress at future meetings in Cairo. They expressed their gratitude to President Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian Government, and the Egyptian people for their warm hospitality and their constant assistance to the negotiators.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th, speaking at a news conference following the statement's release, announced that much was achieved in the past two weeks and that only a few issues remain unresolved. He said this will need two, or at most three, weeks to complete.

Sha'th added that it is difficult to specify a date for the prospective meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to sign the final agreement. He explained that setting a date depends on many issues connected with the two men's prior engagements.

Sha'th asserted that determining the numbers in the Palestinian police force does not pose a problem and will be discussed when the issue is submitted to 'Arafat and Rabin.

He asserted that the statement issued today has special significance because it is the first joint statement about the Palestinian-Israeli Gaza-Jericho negotiations. He noted that this reflects both sides' commitment to implement the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

Sha'th said the two sides have made progress in connection with most of the issues pertaining to the transfer of the civilian authority.

Maj. Gen. Amnon Shahaq said he totally agrees with Dr. Sha'th that real progress was made in the past two weeks, noting that the two delegations will seek to finalize agreement on other issues next week.

He asserted that last week's negotiations were useful, noting that the two sides are now very close to an agreement.

Regarding the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, Shahaq said: We are negotiating so that the withdrawal will take place in line with the agreement between the two parties. The withdrawal will not take place unless the negotiations are completed.

Sha'th said the next round of negotiations in Cairo will involve meetings of all the committees, noting that talks are also under way to draw up the draft of the general agreement. Regarding the Israeli commitment to withdraw from Gaza and Jericho by 13 April, Sha'th remarked that this is a very important date, adding: We are doing our best to complete the negotiations so that the commitment to withdraw on the specified date will be fulfilled.

Sha'th added that in connection with the Palestinian detainees, the Palestinian side is seeking to obtain a general amnesty for all former strugglers.

On the work of the confidence building committee, Shahaq said the committee discussed all the relevant issues, especially Palestinian detainees.

Sha'th said work during the current round of talks was based on maps and agreements were reached on the size of the Palestinian police force [as received], the border

and the vicinity of the Israeli settlements, and security measures on roads and at the border.

Sha'th said other security points, such as security at sea, in the air, on the coast, and on the road between Gaza and Jericho remain to be agreed upon during next week's talks.

He said agreements on many other daily concerns for Palestinians, such as registering the lands of Palestinian absentees, state land, historical sites, communications, and telecommunications, have been reached.

There was also an agreement on a Palestinian radio station, a television station, and ground contacts with communication satellites, Sha'th said.

He said all this will allow the Palestinian authority and the Palestinians, from the beginning of the Palestinian authority, to contact Palestinians abroad, the Arab world, and the outside world through the radio and television stations.

He said the general 15-point agreement, which constitutes a preamble for the civilian, security, and other appendices, will be finalized and negotiations on the general amnesty agreement will be completed.

Dr. Sha'th said the Palestinians sensed no Israeli attempt to obstruct the negotiations. Indeed, he explained, the talks were objective and positive.

He expressed satisfaction with the progress of the talks this week and last. He noted that the two sides are working seriously to reach an agreement as soon as possible.

Sha'th reiterated that the size of Jericho will be determined in the upcoming meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

Shahaq said the release of the Palestinian detainees will take place when an agreement is reached.

He stressed that those detained after 13 September 1993, the day Israel and the PLO signed the Declaration of Principles in Washington, will not be released.

On the participation of Rabin's policy adviser Ya'qov Neria in the talks, Sha'th said the entire delegation represents Prime Minister Rabin, who is responsible for the results of the negotiations. Neria's participation, he said, adds positively to the composition of the Israeli delegation.

Sha'th stressed the importance of a general amnesty for all Palestinian detainees before signing an agreement on the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord.

Shahaq on Release of 'Security Prisoners'

TA2402072894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Interview with Major General Amnon Shahaq, deputy chief of staff and head of the Israeli delegation to the Cairo security talks, by Itay Engel in Cairo, Egypt on 24 February—recorded]

[Text] [Engel] We initially asked Maj. Gen. Shahaq whether he could at this point give us an estimated timetable for the signing of the agreement.

[Shahaq] I do not think I can give you an exact timetable. I can only tell you that the talks in the last two weeks have been more businesslike and that if they continue at this pace and in the same businesslike manner, there is a chance that we may soon wrap them up.

[Engel] Would you describe the issues still in dispute as being mainly technical and marginal—as other members of the delegation described them this morning—or are they matters of substance which may only be concluded after a summit meeting between Rabin and 'Arafat?

[Shahaq] I would say that they are both. What we consider matters of substance may be perceived by the other side as being less important or vice versa. In my opinion, some of the pending issues may be termed matters of substance, while others are technical issues. Therefore, I think quite a lot of work remains before we reach an agreement.

[Engel] We understand that one of the disputed issues is the release of security prisoners. Is there a timetable for their release and is it an inevitable phase? Will it include members of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and other rejectionist organizations?

[Shahaq] There is as yet no timetable for the release of prisoners, which is part of a broader issue known as confidence-building measures. In this context, we will have to deal with other issues, and not just the question of the Palestinian prisoners. There is no doubt that the issue of the prisoners is an important and painful matter to the Palestinian side which would like to reach an agreement on the matter. We will try to reach an agreement on this matter, too.

There is as yet no agreement about a timetable or the number of prisoners to be released. For example, we set several criteria which we will have to discuss. According to this criteria, anybody who engaged in terror after 13 September 1993, the day the agreement was signed in Washington, will not be included in such an agreement. Members of Hamas will not be included either, because they are opposed to the peace process and constitute an opposition to the Palestinians we are sitting with, and because they continue to murder people and to declare that they will go on doing so. Therefore, as long as there is no change in this issue, the entire question of the prisoners will not be concluded.

[Engel] Will we, at least in the first stage, make a one-sided gesture of releasing prisoners?

[Shahaq] Even if such a gesture is made, it will have nothing to do with the negotiations. The negotiations about the release of prisoners are not yet over. To repeat, I believe the moment an understanding is reached it will be publicized.

[Engel] Could you point to any progress with regard to the whereabouts of Israel's MIA's?

[Shahaq] We do not directly deal with this issue in the negotiations, but the fate of Israel's MIA's has come up and the matter is being dealt with. On this issue, too, I cannot point to any spectacular news. However, we will not let go of it, either within or outside the negotiations until we attain some results.

[Engel] Sir, thank you very much and have a nice day.

Palestinian Official: Talks 'Fruitful'

JN2302190494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530
GMT 23 Feb 94

[Interview with Hasan 'Asfur, deputy head of the Palestinian delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks by Sa'id Mu'addi; in Cairo, Egypt; date not given; from the "With the Events" feature—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Mr. Hasan 'Asfur from Cairo: A joint statement was issued today after the end of negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian delegations. What was the content of the statement?

['Asfur] The statement refers to the nature of the atmosphere prevailing at the negotiations. The atmosphere was constructive, positive, and practical. The negotiations were fruitful, and we achieved progress on three issues; namely, civilian issues, security issues, and confidence building measures. In fact, we have achieved progress, and both sides are satisfied with it and hope it will open the way for major progress next week.

[Mu'addi] Mr. Hasan, what are the outstanding issues of disagreement?

['Asfur] There are several issues over which we have not yet reached any agreement, including some security and civilian issues and confidence-building measures. We hope that next week's negotiations will achieve more progress on these issues.

[Mu'addi] What about the Palestinian police? Have you reached any agreement on it?

['Asfur] No, we have not yet reached any agreement. The size of this police force and the type of weapons it will use are still under discussion.

[Mu'addi] What about efforts to release Palestinian prisoners?

['Asfur] There is serious and continuing discussion of this issue, and I believe that matters are moving in the right direction.

[Mu'addi] Have there been contacts since the press statement about holding a summit meeting between Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat in Cairo next week?

['Asfur] Negotiations will resume in Cairo next week on Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area, and we hope a meeting will take place between President 'Arafat and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin when both deem it necessary.

[Mu'addi] Do you believe that all issues will be discussed next week?

['Asfur] It is difficult to fix such a date, but we believe that matters are moving in the right direction. We hope we will reach an agreement within a short time, before the blessed 'Id al-Fitr, that will please our people and both sides.

Sha'th: Intelligence Cooperation Not Broached

PM2202163994 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
20 Feb 94 p1

[Report by Muhammad 'Allam: "Sha'th Tells AL-HAYAH: No Intelligence Agreement With Israel"]

[Text] Cairo—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and head of the Palestinian delegation to the Taba negotiations, has stated that there is no cooperation agreement between the intelligence organs of the PLO and Israel. He emphasized that "there was no agreement of that kind" during last week's Taba negotiations.

In a statement to AL-HAYAH, he said that the agreement on coordination in military and security affairs was about means of preventing friction between the Israeli and Palestinian police forces and promoting the appropriate mechanism for that. He added: "That is a military-security agreement 100 percent and has nothing whatsoever to do with intelligence or exchange of information. There is a big difference."

Sha'th Queried on Negotiations

PM2302111394 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
21 Feb 94 p3

[Report on interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and head of the Palestinian delegation to the negotiations with Israel, by Muhammad 'Allam in Cairo, Egypt; date not given]

[Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to the Palestinian president and head of the Palestinian delegation to the negotiations with Israel on the implementation of the autonomy agreement, has stated that the Palestinians

are trying to halt the drive of certain Arab parties toward discussion of joint projects with Israel. He revealed that, at President Yasir 'Arafat's request, African leader Nelson Mandela agreed not to visit Israel before the emergence of the Palestinian national authority. He stressed the importance of the boycott card to the Palestinian negotiators.

In an interview with AL-HAYAH, Sha'th said that it would not be proper for the Israeli Labor Party to offer the Palestinian less than what Likud offered for peace with Egypt. He stressed that four categories now have the right to return. They are the 1967 refugees, investors, officers and soldiers, and members of the national authority in the family reunion framework. He also confirmed that the PLO is in favor of a general amnesty for collaborators with the occupation authorities "with the exception of those who have killed Palestinians."

Sha'th warned against Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's backtracking from the commitment to the dates for the implementation of the Declaration of Principles. He also said that "the Israeli Army's assumption of responsibility for the negotiations does not necessarily mean obstructing these negotiations."

On this week's negotiation agenda, Sha'th said: "The negotiators will complete discussion of the security procedures for Gaza and Jericho, particularly in relation to the coast, the air, and the sea." He said he does not expect the discussion of these procedures to last "longer than this week, and that includes agreement on the security corridor between Gaza and Jericho."

He added that "what is required during this round is that we should have a final draft agreement and the text pertaining to the presence of UN forces." He said that the water issue will be discussed by the committee responsible for the transfer of civilian authority on Thursday [24 February] following the completion last week of the discussions of issues related to antiquities, state land, and regional planning. Discussion of the issues of the detainees in the context of a document of general amnesty for the Palestinian detainees will also be resumed, he added. He also said: "We will spend two nights drafting the final agreement, but it will only be complete next week, at the end of which President 'Arafat and Rabin will supposedly be invited to resolve six pending issues and then sign the final agreement."

Sha'th said that Rado Meister, head of the International Red Cross Commission in Israel and the occupied territory, handed him in Taba last week a list containing the number of registered detainees based on the latest statistics, totaling 9,400 detainees.

Sha'th cautioned that despite the expectations "it is difficult to give a specific date for the signing because of certain issues, some related and some not related to the agreement." They include "the continuous Israeli attempts to pit the Israeli-Syrian track against the Israeli-Palestinian track and delay one on account of the other,"

and they also include "exploitation of the internal situation in Israel and Rabin's attempts to exert pressure for retreat from what is known as the sacred dates."

Sha'th said that one "should beware of Rabin's attempts to waive the commitment on dates" because "the sanctity of the dates, as opposed to lack of it, is one of the most important positive aspects of the Oslo agreement. By that I mean the fact that there is a specific timetable for each step."

Giving his explanation of the fact that the Palestinian side has recently been speaking of positive developments in the negotiations despite the fears resulting from the Israeli Army's interference in the negotiation process, Sha'th said that "it is partly a question of who is negotiating.... The army does not necessarily always obstruct, but the Israeli Army wanted to have control of the negotiating process."

He added: "When civilians conduct the negotiations, the army obstructs the process and when (Shim'on) Peres negotiates, Rabin obstructs...but, ultimately, all the Israeli parties, with the exception of the right-wing hardliners and some Likud leaders, want a solution because peace is more in the interest of Israel than it is in the interest of the Palestinians although peace is more urgent for us." He added that when "one party takes charge of the negotiations it tries to make progress, contrary to its predecessor."

On the question of Rabin linking the issue of the release of detainees to an amnesty for agents or "collaborators" and their absorption in Palestinian society, Sha'th said that "the PLO is not less formidable than Hamas, which has opened the way for the collaborators to join it..., because we should give everyone who collaborated with the Israelis under pressure and terrorization a chance, with the exception of the collaborators who committed murder crimes against Palestinian citizens, for as Israel made all the strugglers accountable for every killing operation even though that was legitimate resistance, the least we can do is make the collaborators accountable for their crimes."

Sha'th emphasized that "the PLO is not against a general amnesty for all those who made mistakes, so they can return and participate in building their homeland."

He revealed that, in Rabin's view, the general amnesty should cover the Israeli soldiers who opened fire on Palestinians without orders. He pointed out that the target "is an amnesty for all the Palestinians and Israelis who took part in battles."

On the Arab League's announcement that the question of ending the third-degree Arab boycott of companies dealing with Israel would be raised at the Arab League Council's meeting on 27 March, Sha'th criticized the calls for an end to the boycott and emphasized that "we should not pay a price to the Israelis in advance because they charge us for every centimeter, every line, and every word. Everything should be taken into account."

He added: "There can be no naivete in politics. Some say we should concede to the Israelis and God will reward us." Sha'th proposed "a timetable for comprehensive peace, similar to the interim timetable for negotiations on the Palestinian-Israeli track."

Asked if the PLO has held consultations with some Arab parties to halt their drive toward discussion of joint projects with Israel, Sha'th disclosed that there have been "Palestinian efforts on that matter." He added that "African leader Nelson Mandela responded to a request by President 'Arafat—during their meeting in the Netherlands last week—not to accept an invitation to visit Israel until after the establishment of the Palestinian national authority." He continued: "If Mandela has responded it is even more appropriate that the Arab brothers should respond."

On Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' statements about not allowing the Palestinians in the diaspora to return and whether that matter was raised in the negotiations, Sha'th said: "Any Palestinian in the diaspora who decides to go to Gaza or Jericho is entitled to an entry visa from the national authority which can be extended to any period under one year..., and any Palestinian in the diaspora who wants a permanent residence can now have that in the context of family reunion, and that covers investors, officers and soldiers, members of the national authority, and everyone who has been out of the country since 1967."

He added: "The Palestinians in the diaspora since 1948 who do not fall under the aforementioned categories are now entitled to visit, but the question of full repatriation for them will be resolved when the refugee problem is solved."

On 'Arafat's assertion, before the signing of the Cairo agreement, that "Palestine is back on the map," and whether that reflects a conviction that the agreement was the first step toward a Palestinian state, Sha'th said: "There can be no solution without a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital..., and there is no such thing as comprehensive and durable peace without Israeli withdrawal from every inch occupied in 1967.... The Egyptians fought six years for every last inch of Tabá, where we are holding our negotiations, and did not leave a single settler on that territory."

He added: "Likud accepted that. So the Labor Party should not offer us anything less than Likud did." He continued: "Every current step is a step toward a state, but everything at the appropriate time and stage."

'Stalemate' Reported in Paris Economic Talks

TA2402062194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] The economic talks between Israel and the PLO in Paris have run into a stalemate. In their meeting last

night, Finance Minister Avraham Shohat and PLO representative Abu-al-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'] failed to overcome the disagreements between the sides. Our correspondent Yo'av Tocker reports that the meeting lasted five hours ending without results. The main dispute concerns the issue of joint customs duties to be levied by Israel and the autonomy.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Al-Bishari on Country's Stance on Suspects' Trial
NC2302153694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1415 GMT
23 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 23 Feb (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid today met Ibrahim al-Bishari, Libya's permanent representative to the Arab League.

Afterward, al-Bishari stated that he and the secretary general discussed several recent Western statements, including one by U.S. President Bill Clinton that Libya constitutes a threat to the United States' national security and another by the British defense secretary that Libya is seeking to build a nuclear bomb.

Al-Bishari voiced astonishment at these statements, pointing out that Libya is a small and peaceable nation of under 4 million people. He pointed out that Britain never discusses Israel, which has 200 nuclear warheads, refuses to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and opposes the removal of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, al-Bishari said, the Arabs are urging that the Middle East be turned into a region free from such weapons. He pointed out that President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has made an appeal to this effect.

Al-Bishari added that he briefed the Arab League secretary general on the latest developments in the Libyan-Western crisis and the League's role in averting Western threats.

Al-Bishari said Libya is consulting with the members of the seven-member Arab committee and the Arab League Secretariat with the aim of holding a meeting of the seven-member committee on the sidelines of the Arab League Ministerial Council meeting next March. He noted that the aim is to find an acceptable solution that safeguards Libya's sovereignty and independence and averts any tension in the region.

Concerning the Libyan proposal to try the two Libyan suspects in the Hague, al-Bishari said this proposal was submitted by the suspects' legal counsel committee, since the issue is a legal one and concerns the two suspects and their lawyers.

Al-Bishari asserted that Libya, as a state, wants the trial to be held at the International Court of Justice but to be presided over by a Scottish tribunal if Scotland agrees. He announced that this is the most flexibility that Libya can show.

He recalled that his country has taken numerous initiatives since the crisis began and added that Libya does not reject the principle of holding a trial because it believes that a trial is bound to reveal the truth. He said Libya is convinced of its two citizens' innocence and that the world will learn the truth and realize how great an injustice has been done to the peaceable Libyan people.

Paper Publishes Abu-Nidal Letter to al-Qadhdhafi
JN2302204694

[Editorial Report] Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic on 23 February publishes a front-page 300-word unattributed article in which it claims that it has obtained a copy of a letter sent to Libyan Leader Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi by Abu-Nidal (Sabri al-Banna), leader of the Fatah-Revolutionary Council. The paper says that this "secret letter" shows that Abu-Nidal wants to return to the lap of Tripoli.

The paper also publishes a photocopy of the letter, which is dated 22 December 1993. The following is the text of the letter:

"Brother Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September revolution, may God preserve you.

"Sincere Arab greetings,

"O great Arab leader, I send you my sincerest Arab good wishes and through you to the struggling and mujahid Libyan masses, which today are rallying around you to express their unity and reaffirm their choice and affiliation.

"Your voice which reverberated among the Bani Salim masses on 28 jumada al-thani 1414 Hegira, corresponding to 12 December 1993, has been the best expression of the nation's will and its right to life and proof of existence.

"Brother leader of the 1 September revolution,

"The Arab nation's masses have heard your powerful voice with awareness and heard you reaffirming the unity of its causes and defending them as an integrated whole, even if some rulers do not want that. The Palestinian popular revolution is looking toward you and the stone-throwing children are listening to you attentively. Your reverberating voice comes when the Arab revolution's forces, both Arabists and Islamists, are looking toward Arab Tripoli which is subjected to the ugliest form of blockade by the Western American circles and their tools. Your voice has reaffirmed the originality of the 1 September revolution and the credibility of its leader in order to silence those of the fifth column and the tools of doubt, treachery, and plotting.

"Brother leader of the revolution,

"It pleases me to reiterate to you, given my position as a fighting soldier affiliated to the nation's pan-Arab revolution and in order to defend the nation's causes, that my

comrades and I will always be sincere and faithful soldiers in defense of any part of the greater Arab homeland.

"To You, the leader, we send the fragrance of Palestine and the greetings of its children with best and sincerest regards.

"Revolution until victory.

""[Signed] Your brother, Abu-Nidal"

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 15 Feb
NC2402095594

[Editorial Report] The following review of the 15 February issue of Cairo AL-SHA'B summarizes articles that are Islamic in nature.

- CONTENTS:** 1. Corruption and the Struggle for Democracy
2. Writer on Government Corruption
3. Opposition Leader on Corruption, Dialogue, Anti-Islam Campaign
4. Prayers for Bosnians
5. Islamic Writer on Significance of Ramadan
6. Shaykh al-Ghazali Deplores the Afghan War
7. Islamists Win Agronomists Syndicate Elections
8. Improving Ties With Israel
9. Islamic Writer Raps TV Ban on Islamic Announcers

CORRUPTION AND FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY

In its 15 February edition, Cairo AL-SHA'B, the mouthpiece of the opposition Labor Party, features articles and commentaries on corruption in Egypt. In an approximately 2,500-word article on pages 1 and 2, Chief Editor Majdi Ahmad Husayn notes that although everyone in Egypt is aware that corruption is rife, the "clique of rulers and those who are up to their ears in corruption" denies it. He says that at a time when every case of corruption is hushed up, a decision is made to try "the symbol of honor and patriotism, Labor Party leader Ibrahim Shukri." The rulers cover up corruption cases and put pressure on the official newspapers not to report on corruption, he says and highlights the recent accusations of corruption exchanged between two former interior ministers, noting that they were involved in private business during their terms in office in violation of the Constitution. He notes that Islamic jurisprudence, which some people believe to be backward, bans public figures from engaging in private business. He stresses that both ministers were in Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi's cabinet and so Sidqi is "inescapably responsible" for their misconduct. He notes that THE WASHINGTON POST, London's THE GUARDIAN, and THE TIMES of London report on corruption in Egypt but it seems that Sidqi does not read these papers. The author stresses that

the free press will continue to uncover cases of corruption and will struggle until "real democracy" is established "in which no one is above the law."

WRITER ON GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION

In a 700-word article on page 2 entitled "Corruption and Lies in the Government," Jamal As'ad claims that corruption in Egypt is "rife and exceeds bounds." He maintains that the prime minister's statement that the government does not ignore corruption is untrue and that anyone who tries to belittle corruption cases is "an accomplice and colluding." He notes that attempts by senior writers to cover up corruption cases are not in Egypt's interests. He says that there is political, economic, administrative, moral, artistic, and cultural corruption in Egypt. He contends that the People's Assembly is "restricted by constitutional clauses" and cannot withdraw confidence from any Cabinet minister because this requires the president's approval. As'ad notes the recent campaign of defamation between two former interior ministers, who were supposed to combat corruption, saying that both have been found to have made money through corruption. He wonders why their file has been closed and why they and the prime minister have not been called to account.

OPPOSITION LEADER ON CORRUPTION, DIALOGUE, ANTI-ISLAM CAMPAIGN

In an approximately 1,500-word report on page 1 and 4 on Labor Party leader Shukri and Islamic preacher Shaykh Muhammad al-Sharif's "Ramadan tours" of Egyptian governorates, Jamal Imbabi cites Shukri as telling a seminar in al-Mansurah that the party "insists on resisting corruption despite the pressure." Shukri says successive interrogations of the Labor Party leaders and AL-SHA'B correspondents will "not intimidate us." He notes that the government is still postponing the national dialogue with the opposition and says the Labor Party called for "guarantees to render the dialogue successful." He calls for enacting a new constitution. Shukri warns of "the Muslims' slumber in confronting the Western onslaught to destroy Islam" and warns against "a scheme to 'disunite the Muslims and Copts,'" noting Islam's sound stance on the Copts, which maintains that they "have the same rights and duties as Muslims." Shukri said that following the Cold War, the West sees only Islam as "the new enemy that must be destroyed." He says that in America, the leader of the Western camp, there are those who warn of the consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union and they all fear the Islamic revival.

Preacher Muhammad al-Sharif pointed to the dispute between the two former interior ministers, saying that the corrupt establishments are fighting one another. He said that every day that passes paves the road for change and salvation so that those who will rule by God's shari'ah will take over.

In a 400-word article on page 7, Muhammad al-Murshidi suggests that when the government proposed a national

dialogue with the opposition parties, some opposition leaders believed it would be a futile political maneuver to divert the public's attention. Others believed that the rulers might have returned to their senses and realized the serious security, political, and economic situations. The writer notes that the government then repeatedly postponed the date, casting doubts on its seriousness about it. The writer notes that Prime Minister Sidqi claims he does not cover up corruption, yet he sent several AL-SHA'B writers for interrogation just because they revealed one aspect of corruption. He says King Husayn of Jordan permitted honest elections that allowed fair representation of the opposition. The writer goes on: The Algerian leaders realized their serious mistake when they finished off the democratic experience and realized that the only way to emerge from the crisis is to hold a dialogue with the opposition and the Islamic Salvation Front. We thought, he says, that the Egyptian rulers might learn this lesson. But, he stresses, we were surprised to hear President Mubarak say that what happened in Jordan and Algeria will not happen in Egypt. What is the use of the dialogue with the government, the writer wonders.

PRAYERS FOR BOSNIANS

In a 100-word report on page 1, Khalid Yunis notes that tens of thousands of people performed prayers at al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo last Friday over the souls of the Bosnian martyrs killed in the criminal bombardment of Sarajevo. The report notes that the awqaf minister agreed on the prayers for the martyrs in the mosques that belong to the Awqaf Ministry. In his Friday sermon, Shaykh Isma'il Sadiq al-'Adawi stressed the significance of jihad and willpower for the Islamic nation during Ramadan, stressing that the continuation of the Muslims' tragedy in Bosnia is due to the international community's "defeatism and collusion" and to the failure of the regional, Arab, and Islamic organizations to do their duty.

ISLAMIC WRITER ON SIGNIFICANCE OF RAMADAN

In a 1,700-word article on page 5, Islamic writer Mustafa Mashur welcomes the advent of Ramadan and elaborates on the values it signifies for the Muslims. He urges Muslims to unite, saying that divisions among Muslims made them victims of the enemies of Islam in various parts of the world. He urges Muslims to exert serious efforts and to rally in support of Muslim brothers and sisters who are exposed to genocide, blockades, starvation, and displacement in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Palestine, Kashmir, and elsewhere.

SHAYKH MUHAMMAD AL-GHAZALI DEPLORES THE AFGHAN WAR

In a 300-word article by famous Islamic preacher Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali, he assails those who seek personal interests and those who don the garb of Islam although they are not true Muslims. He cites examples of those Afghan leaders who, after their struggle and victory

over the communists, have become embroiled in a power struggle that has devastated their country and displaced their people. He says he is distressed when he hears about fighting for booty in Afghanistan. He stresses that these leaders have "distorted and defamed Islam."

ISLAMISTS WIN AGRONOMISTS SYNDICATE ELECTIONS

A 50-word report on page 1 notes that the Islamic trend representatives won the agronomists syndicate elections in Cairo and al-Jizah for the first time, despite rigging and pressure by the government organs to prevent the Labor Party member from winning.

IMPROVING TIES WITH ISRAEL

In an approximately 3,000-word article on page 5, Dr. Muhammad Hilmi Murad discusses Egypt's Government newspapers' reports intended to prepare public opinion to welcome joint projects with Israel even before a comprehensive peace is reached in the region. He notes AL-AKHBAR chief editor's article calling for warming up peace and promoting ties with Israel. He notes AL-AHRAM chief editor's call for establishing gas pipes to Israel and even to supplying Nile water to Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel. Murad argues that it is important to study the effects of the Israeli projects and the "conditions outlined to control our national economy." He says that the government newspapers skip over these issues to pave the way for what the United States and the Western countries are trying "to impose on us to enable Israel to dominate the economic cartel designed for the Middle East" and to eliminate any attempt to establish Arab-Islamic economic unity. He notes that Israel has not given up its motto of a greater Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates and has not agreed to give up its nuclear weapons. He wonders if anyone can imagine a spirit of cooperation, accord, and peace prevailing between a country in possession of nuclear weapons and others that have only conventional weapons. He argues against accepting joint projects in Sinai because it is "demilitarized in favor of Israel."

Mustafa Bakri is the author of an approximately 1,000 word-article on page 8. He criticizes Agriculture Minister Dr. Yusuf Wali's statement before the People's Assembly in which he praised the benefits gained from agricultural cooperation with Israel. He says that Wali shows disdain for the people's feelings when he says that the peace agreement signed between Israel and Egypt in 1978 brought about numerous benefits and introduced the use of Israeli technology and expertise into Egypt. He contends that cooperation "serves the Israeli and not the Egyptian economy." He notes that Israel lacks capital and that its "lifeline lies in opening up Arab markets before it." He says that Israel enters Egypt and the region "not to contribute to its development but to control its resources and bolster its economy." He contends that the Israeli plan to link the Red Sea to the Dead Sea and the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean is aimed at "eliminating the strategic importance of the Suez Canal." He exhorts

citizens that their support of the Zionist treasury means that they antagonize their homeland, interests, and religion," which urges struggle against enemies.

ISLAMIC COLUMNIST RAPS TV BAN ON ISLAMIC ANNOUNCERS

In his regular column, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Quddus, noted Muslim Brotherhood writer, features a 500-word article on page 12 in which he assails those in charge of the Cairo Radio and Television, saying that their thinking "runs counter" to Islam and freedom. He says that they ban female announcers who wear the head covering. He wonders how Egypt can claim to be an Islamic country when it bans an announcer wearing a head covering. He says that the government's ban on the Radio and Television employees' establishing a union to defend their interests runs counter to freedom and Islam, noting that this is a "totalitarian mentality" and indicates "absolute rule." He argues that the Egyptian man in the street resents the television reports glorifying the ruler, noting that the people cannot forget the uproar that accompanied the nomination of President Mubarak as the only candidate for the presidential elections. He notes that Egyptian television is a master at twisting reality and turning it upside down.

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 15 Feb 94 NC2402113594

[Editorial Report] The following review of the 15 February issue of Cairo 'AQIDATI summarizes articles that are Islamic in nature.

Contents:

1. Grand Imam on Dialogue in Islam.
2. Ending the Boycott With Israel.
3. Social Solidarity in Islam
4. On the Koran and Hostile Currents
5. Religious Versus Enlightening Books
6. Muslim Infighting in Afghanistan
7. Islamic States and Bosnia-Herzegovina

GRAND IMAM ON DIALOGUE IN ISLAM

In its 15 February, the state-owned weekly 'AQIDATI publishes on page 3 an 800-word article by Grand Imam of al-Azhar His Eminence Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq, in which he writes about the ethics of dialogue in Islam. Citing the Koranic verse "Invite all to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious," he explains that preaching is meant for those who are already bound by the right principles, while arguing is usually used with those who disagree with one's ideas and tend to use rough or aggressive language in voicing their differences.

Imam Jad-al-Haqq remarks that "violent language is unnecessary and fruitless, because it hurts the feelings and spoils amity." He notes that choosing the right word or expression can sometimes solve problems.

ENDING THE BOYCOTT WITH ISRAEL

A 100-word report on page 3 cites the grand imam as he emphasizes that "it is inevitable to maintain all types and forms of Arab economic and trade boycott of Israel until full withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, primarily Jerusalem and al-Aqsa Mosque, is achieved."

Citing Imam Jad-al-Haq's interview with AL-ITTIHAD newspaper of the United Arab Emirates, the report adds that the imam pointed out that "Israel's history shows that it has not honored a pledge or respected a promise. Therefore, calling for or demanding the abolition of economic and trade boycotts with it before full withdrawal from all the lands it occupies is impermissible and improper, and also a grave mistake."

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY IN ISLAM

A 2,500-word report on page 4 gives an account of a seminar 'AQIDATI held in the Anas Ibn-Malik Mosque in the city of Suez under the banner of "Fasting and Social Solidarity." After discussing social solidarity in Islam, particularly in the fasting month of Ramadan, speakers answer the audience's questions.

Asked if there is hope to extend social solidarity to Muslims around the world, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina, al-Azhar Professor Fathi Mihriz replies that all Muslims should hasten to give a hand to brothers in Bosnia-Herzegovina if they get the chance.

Chief editor al-Sayyid 'Abd-al-Ra'uf blames all Muslims for what is happening in the Muslim world today, because "they have deviated from the correct understanding of Islam, lived in a trance and in superstitions that have no link with or root in religion, and let Europe advance in science and take the reins of the world."

Asked what 'AQIDATI does to confront the communists and secularists who attack Islam from within, 'Abd-al-Ra'uf says: "We are being subjected to a fierce campaign from the secularists and communists to whom the doors of some newspapers and magazines, some of which belong to the government, were opened." He reiterates that 'AQIDATI has a clear and obvious role in fighting ignorance and superstitions, as well as those who fight Islam.

ON THE KORAN AND HOSTILE CURRENTS

Page 10 features a 1,500-word report on remarks Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali made at "The Opera Cultural Salon" on 14 February regarding anti-Islamic currents and their possible impact on Koran and tradition. At the beginning, al-Ghazali stressed that "there is no fear for Koran and tradition from the anti-Islamic currents, because the Almighty will guard His message against corruption." He affirms that "the Koran and tradition will stay in spite of the secularists."

Al-Ghazali attributes the Islamic nation's weakness and its political, economic, and social defeats to many

causes, including "the misunderstanding of the Koran and tradition and the failure to observe and examine narrations thoroughly." The problem is how to promote your Islam since you did not adhere to it or apply it accurately, he said.

He added that Muslims are fighting two battles: One against the terrorist movements that have wrongly been attributed to Islam and the second against the allegations of the "secular enlighteners" who refuse to see that "Islam is an enlightened intellectual movement that urges the people to learn their religion correctly and draw evidence from the universe." He stressed that the nation can never accept the view that the revelation is an obsolete concept, that the Koran is an Arabic literary text, or that the Prophet's tradition is inapplicable.

Dr. Ahmad Kamal Abu-al-Majd remarked that the nation is experiencing discord and disagreement and that some groups belittle thought and make their own rulings that forbid everything. He asks al-Ghazali why such groups appeared and how their thought can be rectified. He answers that the cause lies in the fact that Islamic culture is being presented in a fake image that is full of contradictions. This has led to differences that have affected the thought of the religious youth. Therefore, he stresses the need for cleansing the Islamic culture of all the old delusions and germs implanted in it.

RELIGIOUS VERSUS ENLIGHTENING BOOKS

In a 200-word article on page 18, columnist Mamduh al-'Ashri criticizes Dr. Samir Sarhan, chairman of the Public Book Authority, for expressing his view on a television program that "Islamic books discount the brainpower of youth and their low prices adversely affected other books on display in the fair." The columnist wonders how such a statement can get past the censor, as it casts doubt on facts stated in the Koran.

Al-'Ashri is surprised that Sarhan says this while "licentious books and pornographic magazines fill the fair's corridors." These books not only contradict Islam, but also the Egyptian people's customs and tradition, he remarks.

He notes that religious books were the most expensive at the fair, while the other so-called enlightening books were the cheapest. Nonetheless, he adds, more than 15 million Egyptian pounds worth of religious books were sold at the fair.

Wondering what "those people" have against the honorable al-Azhar, which represents pure Islam which is the official religion of the country, al-'Ashri notes that the Vatican, "Rome's pride," banned Madonna's book and no one dared to object because the Vatican is a symbol of religion. How can we allow ourselves to talk against al-Azhar, which stands for Islam, he asks.

Touching on the same subject, Ibrahim Nisar writes a 150-word article on page 23 in which he talks about "the high voices that express concern over the numerous

booklets that talk about torture in the grave and bliss in paradise—which they call after-death imaginings—and claim that these booklets discount the brainpower of youth."

Nasr is surprised that it is these same voices that demand freedom of expression and of the press and are responsible for publishing the "impolite" books which were confiscated and banned from circulation by the law.

He asks: What freedom do they want: Freedom of thought or of disbelief?

MUSLIM INFIGHTING IN AFGHANISTAN

Chairman of the Board Samir Rajab writes in his 350-words column on page 1 that the warring factions in Afghanistan broke the Ramadan cease-fire agreement in just a few days. He remarks that the mujahidin who filled the world with talk about their jihad are proving day after day that all they ever thought of was their personal interests and their lust for power.

Rajab regrets that "the communist rule in Afghanistan was more stable and secure and more protective of people's lives." It is true that it had many shortcomings and gaps, but, on the other hand, it did not allow that infinite bloodletting, he says.

He argues that that was the cat and mouse game between America and the former Soviet Union. The two came out intact, letting the naive Afghan fall into a bottomless pit, he says, adding: Russia has cashed in its chips, letting America take all the loot, not only in that region but in the whole world. Meanwhile, the miserable mujahidin are finishing themselves off with their own hands, he says.

In conclusion, Rajab expresses his surprise that "other people have sealed their minds off, refusing to learn from the Afghan experience. The result is more blood, more destruction, and ruin." It is true that one man's poison is another's meat, he remarks.

ISLAMIC STATES AND BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

A 150-word report by Jamal Salim, page 20, says that the World Islamic Council for Call and Relief has issued a statement "condemning the massacres to which Sarajevo Muslims were subjected. The statement appeals to Arab and Islamic governments and people to adopt strict measures, particularly the severance of diplomatic and cultural ties with Serbia and the states that support it, primarily Russia and Greece, and the expulsion of these states' ambassadors from Islamic capitals."

The report adds that the council called on Islamic people, political and party institutions, trade unions, and other economic, trade, cultural, and tourist centers "to boycott the Yugoslav companies and freeze all dealings with them."

The statement also called on the Islamic states to adopt a political and military plan to lift the ban on arming

Bosnia-Herzegovina, set up a world popular court to punish the Serbian criminals, and collect donations for Bosnian Muslims.

The statement finally calls on Islamic states "not to recognize the geographic and demographic changes imposed by the brutal Serbian power."

Basyuni al-Halwani's 500-word column on page 6 criticizes Islamic states that content themselves with statements of denunciation and condemnation and watch the "Serbian criminals" as they demonstrate their malice for Islam and Muslims, desecrate the sanctities, and destroy lives.

He says that the international community has proved that it protects the law of the jungle when it closed its eyes to the Serbian crimes for over two years and encouraged them with its inaction and negligence to liquidate the Islamic identity of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

He regrets that despite the hideousness of the Serbian crimes, states like Russia uncovered their ugly faces, started to encourage the Serbians in their aggression, and hampered every attempt to restore peace to the region.

Palestinian Affairs

Spokesman Condemns Attack on Israeli Women

LD2402103894 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
2200 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] A Palestinian spokesman has announced the following:

Operations of violence and killings have recently been escalating in the occupied Palestinian territories. This violence has deliberately been directed against our students and children by the Israeli Army and armed settlers which has constituted a serious precedent especially after the signing of the Cairo agreement. However, in the same breath, we do not agree with and rather denounce the attack on women and especially the pregnant among them as happened recently in the killing of a settler, which is in contrast with Arab and Islamic ethics.

This escalation harms the peace process. Self-restraint is required from everyone, especially toward the unarmed peaceful civilians.

PLO Faction Reassesses Support for Peace Process

TA2302183994 *Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic*
23 Feb 94 p 7

[Text] The Palestinian Popular Struggle Front [PPSF] issued a statement yesterday in which it said: Since the signing of the Declaration of Principles [DOP], Israel has pursued a policy of procrastination on all the negotiating tracks and has continued to ignore our legitimate rights, stipulated by international charters and resolutions. Furthermore, it has backed down from what it agreed on in

the DOP. As far as Rabin and his negotiating teams are concerned, dates are no longer firm nor sacred. Withdrawal has become a redeployment of Israeli forces, settlements require military protection and safe roads protected by the Israeli Army, and so forth.

In fact, this Israeli policy has relied on the absence of Arab-Palestinian coordination and is trying to deal with the Palestinian side unilaterally. It has also relied on the PLO's internal conflicts, bad planning, lack of a negotiating authority, and confusion between overt and covert negotiations. This has caused the cancellation of many national constants and the suspension of others to an unspecified date. The security agreement is the best evidence of this.

This stage, in which the Israeli tactic coincides with the policy of economic siege and inhibiting our people, prompts us to reassess our support for the political process and to review all its aspects as having been planned and not spontaneous. The decision to seal the occupied territories, bar Palestinian workers from earning their livelihood, accelerate land confiscation, boycott Palestinian agricultural products and prevent their export, increase roadblocks, intensify tax collection campaigns, and close off Jerusalem—all these are just an economic war. This war has been abetted by some Arab states which have not only cut off financial aid to our people in their distress, but have also refused to transfer funds donated by our sons working in those states. We exclude the Libyan Jamahiriyyah and Iraq because they have been subjected to an international blockade.

Because of the perils that this stage holds for the cause and struggles of our people, the PPSF, which supported the PLO in the peace process, believes that the peace process has deviated from its track and has canceled

many agreed on national constants. The PPSF affirms that its consent was conditional on preserving the national constants and improving the Palestinian negotiating performance. But what has happened in the security agreement signed in Cairo indicates that the situation is becoming worse and that Israel is blackmailing the Palestinian negotiators. Therefore, the PPSF demands the following:

1. That the Palestine Central Council be convened to review every agreement that is signed and send its recommendations to the Palestine National Council [PNC].
2. That the PNC be convened to review all agreements that have been signed and either approve, amend, or reject those agreements on democratic bases.
3. That a negotiating authority be formed to determine all constants and lines that must not be overstepped by any negotiator.
4. The release of Palestinian prisoners before any new agreement.

If, however, the current approach continues, the PPSF will reassess its stance toward the entire peace process.

'Strugglers' Said To Return to Gaza, Jericho

JN2402084094 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 24 Feb 94 p 19

[Text] Amman—A responsible Palestinian source has stated that all the Palestinian revolution strugglers in the diaspora will return to Jericho and Gaza and that priority will be given to them. He denied rumors that only a limited number will return and during a limited period of time.

Algeria

Zeroual Urges Workers To Continue Market Reform

LD2302223594 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1936 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Address by President Liamine Zeroual at workers' rally in Dar ech-Chaab on 23 February—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God the Merciful and the Compassionate, Brothers Algerian workers, Sisters Algerian workers, I greet you and through you I greet all Algerian male and female workers inside and outside the homeland.

We are meeting today to commemorate the annual anniversary of the General Union of Algerian Workers and the anniversary of the recovery of the national wealth. On this occasion I congratulate all male and female workers. [passage omitted]

We are celebrating this anniversary while Algeria is tackling its many-faceted crisis, including the economic crisis. We are aware that the first ones affected by this crisis are the workers, the people on low income, and the most deprived social groups. The economic stagnation has led for years to an increase of unemployment and shortage of investments. This has added to the difficulty of living conditions.

I take this opportunity to salute our workers who face the difficulty of this situation with patience and wisdom deserving all appreciation and without abandoning their duty of safeguarding the national economy and without surrendering to the provocations or the political one-upmanships coming from several quarters. [passage omitted]

We are following with interest the situation of other countries that went through this experiment; we are aware of the economic and social pitfalls that went hand in hand with these experiments; and this prompts us neither to worship nor imitate any experiment; we do not give any preference to one over another.

We are aware that no matter how strong the capabilities of liberalism may be, they remain limited like any other economic choices. If easing the negative sides of the market economy does happen only through a genuine mobilization of the nation's cadres, and the establishment of a real program for national solidarity; this factor also takes place via the support of the state, the bolstering of its capabilities to defend the most needy classes, the presence of a scientific management of resources, and an increase of national production.

In this field, we aim to strengthen the state; and at the same time support dialogue and social consultation, because the Algerian state belongs to all Algerians; it is the state of law; it is there to serve the people in its entirety.

However, we should reiterate that the state is not and will not be lenient with those who work for the destruction of the country and the sabotage of its economic capabilities. In these circumstances, the workers are called upon to mobilize themselves and show vigilance to defend their institutions against acts of sabotage.

Brothers and sisters, if we want to meet the challenge, first of all we should rediscover the value of work and the value of efforts and efficiency; rewards should be based on this criterion alone. Here, we should be frank, we have squandered a great deal of precious time because of absenteeism and because of management negligence; because of wastage and mismanagement in production; and an exaggerated usage of the right to strike.

Reviving the national economy, upon which depends the stability and equilibrium of society, falls within the tasks that await us all: namely, the restoration of security, the eradication of violence, the underpinning of the state's structure, the imposition of the rule of law by the competent authorities, the introduction of profound reforms to the state administration, and opening the door of opportunity for youth and capable cadres. All of these actions are seeking to renew the system of the country in a comprehensive way.

In the next few weeks the economic and social council will be installed where members of various walks of life in the society will meet to discuss the issues and submit proposals in their respect to the executive authorities.

We are convinced that the trade union organization represented by the general union of Algerian workers will play a significant role in these consultations.

In the political field we stand by the consultation and the wide participation and by the serious dialogue with all national political forces which abide by the constitution and reject the use of violence. [passage omitted]

Brothers and sisters, in conclusion I reiterate congratulations to the Algerian workers, and I call on them once again to be mobilized and vigilant and to work more and be more united and defend the future and the destiny of the country.

May God make us all successful, and may God's peace and blessings be upon you.

Egypt

Bomb Explodes Aboard Cairo-Luxor Train

NC2302185194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1810 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 23 Feb (MENA)—An official security source has stated that at around 1430, a device placed on the overhead luggage rack in a first-class coach on train no. 980 went off as the train traveled from Cairo to Luxor. The explosion occurred as the train was passing the village of al-Muti'ah after leaving Asyut Station.

Some 11 passengers, including six tourists, were injured in the explosion. They include: Major Faysal Fattuh al-Wakil of Suhaj; Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hayy, a technician in the Arab Contractors Company; Faysal Fahmi Adam, an orthopedist at Asyut University; Lieutenant Jamal Ahmad Husayn, a resident of Suhaj; and Rif'at 'Abd-al-Majid, a train worker. The wounded tourists are Angel Ascot and Joe Fix, New Zealand; Ulrike Dolgan and Christian Schreiker, Germany; and Grace Casio and Jocelyn Clonita, Australia. They were all slightly hurt. All the wounded were taken to Asyut University Hospital for treatment.

The explosion occurred in the second coach on first class, damaging the coach roof and shattering windows. An initial examination of the train indicates that the shattered glass probably injured the passengers.

Leading officers in the Asyut Security Directorate, the criminology laboratory, and various detective agencies went to the scene and the prosecution was notified to launch an investigation.

Investigations are under way to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident. The train was sent on its way to Suhaj then Luxor after an inspection by explosives experts.

Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah Claims Attack

NC2302172194 Paris AFP in English 1702 GMT
23 Feb 94

[Text] Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah, in a communique sent to AFP, claimed responsibility for the latest train attack and renewed its warning to foreigners.

"It is up to tourists to leave the country so as not to endanger their lives in the confrontation underway between the al-Jama'ah and the repressive regime," it said.

The latest attack was in retaliation for last week's death sentence against three al-Jama'ah members in the army, it said, adding that four policemen were killed for the same reason.

A court in Sidi Barrani, near the Libyan border, condemned the three soldiers to death for plotting to assassinate President Husni Mubarak at the local air base.

[Paris AFP in English at 1654 GMT on 23 February adds the following: "The bomb attack on a Cairo-Luxor train wounded 11 people on Wednesday, including six foreign tourists, the interior ministry said. The foreigners were two Australians, two Germans and two New Zealanders, it said."

["While MENA said the bomb exploded in a carriage, other informed sources said assailants hurled it at the moving train."]

Police Clash With 'Terrorists' in al-Badari

NC2302151994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1352 GMT
23 Feb 94

[Text] Asyut, 23 Feb (MENA)—Security troops in Asyut this morning mounted a search campaign in the city of al-Badari. Various police departments from the Asyut Governorate took part in the operation.

While the security forces were performing their routine work, terrorist elements fired on them, wounding Major Majdi Sulayman Musa, First Lieutenant Yasir Kamal Ibrahim, and Lieutenant 'Abd-al-Muhain Husayn. Two terrorists, one of them known to be dangerous, were also wounded. The clashes between the terrorists and police also wounded three Central Security conscripts and two passers by, Fahd Muhammad Mahmud, a student, and Su'ad 'Ali Ahmad, a farmer.

The al-Badari prosecutor's office is investigating the incident. The search operations in the area for the remaining terrorist elements and outlaws are continuing.

Official Receives Somali Faction Leader

NC2302162794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT
23 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 23 Feb (MENA)—Assistant Foreign Minister Sa'id Rif'at today met Mohamed Abshir, the leader of the Democratic Front for the Salvation of Somalia, who arrived in Cairo earlier today at the invitation of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry to attend a meeting of Somali faction leaders. The meeting will discuss the situation in Somalia and ways to coordinate the positions of the factions with the aim of effecting national reconciliation before the United States and European forces withdraw from Somalia by the end of March.

Abshir announced that Somalia is passing through a critical stage and that the U.S. and European forces have begun their withdrawal.

Noting that Egypt is helping the United Nations to find a solution to the problem, he stressed Somalia's need for this role in its quest for peace and national reconciliation. He voiced the hope that the Somali leaders will show the necessary sense of responsibility to restore peace and security in the country and establish a central authority. He said that when this has been done, free elections can be held supervised by the Arab countries, United Nations, OAU, and ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] to ensure they are fair.

Paper Urges Lebanon To Control Hizballah Activity

NC2402081494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2252 GMT
23 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 23 Feb (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR urges the Lebanese Government to control the activities of Hizballah in southern Lebanon, especially in the part controlled by Israel, allegedly as its security zone.

The paper says in its editorial for 24 February: This, however, does not mean we are calling for stopping the activity of the Lebanese resistance, which is a legitimate act against any occupier. But resistance must stem from genuinely patriotic elements; it must not be left to groups with suspect objectives.

The paper says Hizballah is working on behalf of Iran, implementing its policies and receiving financing and arms from it.

The paper says Iran sponsors terrorist groups in a number of Arab and Islamic countries, and is trying to foil the peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, Syrians, and Lebanese.

AL-AKHBAR concludes that imposing Lebanese Government control over Hizballah is an essential step that is in Lebanon's interest.

Libya

Opposition Officers Group Reaffirms Commitment to Leader

PM2302151794 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
22 Feb 94 p4

[Text] London, AL-HAYAH—Dozens of officers and soldiers from the opposition Libyan National Army [LNA] have issued a statement in which they said: "We have this week seen a statement addressed to public opinion and signed by two comrades in arms who are LNA officers. It contained a number of contradictions, prevarications, and false claims which, we know perfectly well, did not emanate from these two brothers or have anything to do with the code of honor, struggle, and military solidarity we committed ourselves to as far back as the first day we decided that confrontation with the unjust regime in the homeland was inevitable."

Colonel Salih al-Habbuni and Lieutenant Colonel 'Abdallah al-Shaykhi had issued a statement saying that LNA Commander Colonel Khalifah Haftar had lost all his leadership posts and that the army was one of the institutions of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya [NFSL], the opposition faction which has suffered a split.

Haftar, it should be recalled, had signed the secession statement and announced the withdrawal of all the opposition army's officers and soldiers from the NFSL.

The statement of the officers and soldiers said: "These two brothers were used by certain parties as a tool to break our fighters' unity of ranks and purpose.... We reject the plots hatched against our National Army and the fact that some of its members are implicated in cheap destructive attempts and are being used by an individual or a group as an instrument for the fulfillment of power ambitions and temporary selfish gains."

They also declared:

"1. The LNA rejects everything in the statement issued by these two comrades and see the issuing of that statement in their names as a cheap and failed attempt to undermine the unity of our patriotic forces. Despite that, we give them a chance to reconsider their position and to rejoin their comrades in arms in the same trench. We remind them of the military honor and the historic responsibility entrusted to us by our brothers and our people. They should, before it is too late, realize the seriousness of slipping into such cheap attempts perpetrated by power-mad individuals.

"2. The LNA reaffirms its absolute commitment as an integral military unit to the declaration made by Commander in Chief Steff Col. Khalifah Abu-al-Qasim Haftar, that the LNA has left the NFSL and severed all organizational links with it and would not abide by any decision or directive issued by it.

"3. The LNA declares that the statements made by the NFSL Secretary General (Muhammad al-Muqaryif) on the appointment of a new LNA command was but a link in the cheap plot against the LNA unity and cohesion in the service of his own personal aims and interests, and a manifestation of the autocratic and domineering spirit which was one of the reasons why many, including the LNA, have abandoned the NFSL. The LNA rejects all kinds of hegemony and blind domineering, refuses to be led by anyone other than its honorable sons, rejects the ignorant methods of charting its national struggle, rejects all the statements and decisions made by the NFSL's secretary general, considering them to be tantamount to interference in its affairs, and announces its adherence to its command, options, and struggle programs.

"4. The LNA is an integral part of the Libyan patriotic armed forces at home for it was born out of these forces and made of their strugglers, and it belongs to the entire homeland and to all the Libyan people. It declares to everyone that it will not relent nor will it stop fighting the corrupt regime imposing itself on our country and people, and will join hands with all honorable men to wage the battle of liberation. It most confidently, strongly, and unitedly renews the pledge and promise to its Commander Haftar that it will resolutely continue the struggle with heroic determination and patience until final salvation and definite victory."

The statement was signed by the following officers: Captains Nasr al-Din al-Sadiq Karmus, Salim 'Abd-al-Salam al-Zuyaghn, 'Abdallah al-Asghar, 'Abd-al-'Azim Muhammad Yusuf, Salah Muhammad Shu'ayb, Sa'id al-Bal'azi, Musaddiq al-Fanidi, Sa'd al-Ghazal Madi, 'Ali 'Ashur, and Abu-Sha'alah Ibrahim; First Lieutenants al-Asmar 'Abd-al-Salam Ibride, 'Adil Abu-Zayd al-Hajjaji, and Muhammad Tahir Rashid; and Second Lieutenants Milad Ibrahim Abu-Zahw and Misbah Mas'ud al-Farajani.

It was also signed by 59 warrant officers.

Sudan

Minister Confirms Knowledge of U.S. Envoy's Trip South

EA2302170594 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih has confirmed that the tour by Donald Petterson, the U.S. ambassador in Khartoum, of some areas in the south of the country took place with the knowledge of the Foreign Ministry. He added that the American ambassador had briefed him during a meeting with him today about his tour of some areas on the southern border. Abu-Salih said that the government approved the food drops for camps of displaced people in the Mundri and (Parajok) areas in cooperation with the United Nations. Dr. Abu-Salih added that he had assured the American ambassador that the government was trying to end to the ongoing war in the south, stressing that Sudan was very dependent on the initiative of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development states. The foreign minister affirmed that a cease-fire in the south should be part of a comprehensive solution to the problem of the south.

Abu-Salih Urges Diplomatic Solution in South

EA2302120594 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Husayn Abu-Salih has confirmed Sudan's belief that the southern issue should be dealt with within the framework of a diplomatic solution. Commenting on the American ambassador to Sudan's remarks at his news conference in Nairobi, Husayn Abu-Salih said diplomatic efforts represent a priority for solving the problem of the south. He added: We will give our attention to the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development initiative. He confirmed Sudan's support for a peaceful solution.

On the appointment of an American envoy to Sudan, Husayn Abu-Salih said that no official notification from the American Administration has reached Sudan in this connection. He expressed his hope for earnest and (successful) cooperation to reach a peaceful, just, and rapid solution in order to end the bloodshed and the exhaustion of resources and to proceed towards development and stability.

SPLA Reportedly Repels Government Brigade

AB2302094694 Paris AFP in English 2116 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Nairobi, 22 Feb (AFP)—The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has claimed that its forces repulsed a huge government infantry brigade between Amadi and Lui offensive on February 12, capturing tanks, lorries and communications equipment.

A statement issued here Tuesday by John Garang's SPLA faction said its forces of Maridi-Mundri, reinforced by those from Rumbek, under the command of Gier Chuong Aluong and Jadallah Wani, destroyed two tanks, and 16 lorries, forcing the enemy to run in disarray.

During their flight, the government forces abandoned seven landrovers and four Toyotas mounted with heavy machine guns, ammunition of various categories and food, the statement said, adding that SPLA forces also captured a radio communication set and one of its operators, a man from the Nuba Mountains.

The Sudanese Government has persistently denied that its forces had mounted a major offensive in southern Sudan, where a bloody civil war has been raging since 1983 between government forces and southern rebels seeking to end domination of the mainly Christian and animist south by the Arabised Moslem north. Khartoum has instead said the fighting has been between the different faction of the SPLA, a claim that has been strongly denied by the southern rebels.

Information Minister Assails Opposition UK Visit

PM2402094594 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 22 Feb 94 p6

[Report by 'Abdallah al-Haji: "Sudanese Information Minister Tells AL-HAYAH: The Opposition's Call for a Blockade Against Sudan Confirms Its Isolation From Its People"]

[Text] Jeddah—Sudanese Information Minister 'Abd-al-Basit Sabdarat has strongly attacked the Sudanese opposition's meeting at the British House of Lords and saw the opposition leaders' call on the Security Council to impose a blockade against Sudan "while they stay at European hotels, as exposing their isolation from the people because, through such a call, they seek to blockade and starve their own people."

He told AL-HAYAH in Jeddah that this British step "confirms the soundness and verity of the Sudanese decision expelling the British ambassador from Khartoum because he interfered in the same way in Sudanese affairs."

He added: "It is really regrettable that Sudanese people now enter the British Parliament and talk about the issue of the south forgetting that Britain was the main cause of that problem originally. It was the one which created the problem of the south and then prevented the interaction of the north and south for many years."

Sabdarat ridiculed the Sudanese opposition parties meeting in London saying that "they believe victory will be theirs at the hands of the crusaders. They forget that by embracing them Britain aims to kill the Islamic and cultural trend in Sudan." He criticized the results of the meetings and said that "they gave a true picture of the state of the Sudanese opposition abroad. They were

unable to agree at these meetings. While the Democratic Unionist Party supported Sudan's unity, the Ummah Party wanted an interim period after which the question of self-determination would be considered, and then Bona Malwal, representative of the south, said that Sudan's independence came about incorrectly, held the north responsible for all the mistakes, and presented the issue as a dispute between the north and the south." The Sudanese information minister added: "The opposition grouping cannot take a stand on the question of self-determination in southern Sudan because the Sudanese people know the weakness of that point."

Sabdarat said that "those urging the Security Council to intervene militarily and to impose a blockade against Sudan forgot, as they sat in hotels in London and Europe, that they were in fact calling for a blockade against, and for the starvation of, their own people in Sudan, as if they were on another planet." He accused them of "having a narrow view of things, and the fact that they stay at posh hotels in luxury does not enable them to judge the situation in Sudan realistically."

The Sudanese information minister praised his country's relations with Eritrea saying that they "are strategic relations and we will not allow emotions and emotionalism to affect the strategy of these relations."

Al-Bashir Signs Decree Appointing State Ministers

EA2302122094 Omdurman National Unity Radio in English 1500 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] The president of the Republic, Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, on Monday issued the 10th Republican Decree for 1994, appointing 142 ministers and advisers for the 26 states of the country. According to the

decree, every northern state is to have five ministers and the fifth minister, for peace and rehabilitation, is to be part of the state's government. [sentence as heard] An adviser for political affairs has been ordered for northern Bahr al-Ghazal and Jonglei States.

Authorities Reportedly Foil 'Plot' Against 'Arafat *NC2302134694 Paris AFP in English 1252 GMT* *23 Feb 94*

[Text] Cairo, Feb 23 (AFP)—The Sudanese authorities foiled a plot to kill PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Khartoum in December, the Egyptian weekly Al-Ahali reported Wednesday [23 February].

An Iranian diplomat serving in Khartoum and two Lebanese were arrested and held until the end of an Islamic conference, during which they planned to kill 'Arafat, the leftist opposition weekly said, without citing its sources. The three were later expelled.

Al-Ahali said they were found in possession of pistols with silencers and poisoned knives.

Khartoum was tipped off about the plot by non-Sudanese sources.

The paper also said most of the 1,900 Egyptians who volunteered to fight against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s were currently in Yemen and Sudan.

The Egyptian Government holds the veterans of the Afghan conflict responsible for fomenting fundamentalist unrest in Egypt, in which more than 300 people have died since the violent anti-government campaign started in March 1992.

Yemen

'Official Source' Criticizes Leaders' Recent Actions

JN2302130694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network
in Arabic 1205 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] In light of the current situation and its developments since the signing of the document of pledge and accord in Amman, an official source has made the following statement to the Yemeni News Agency, SABA:

Following the signing of the pledge and accord document, and amid the joy and happiness which prevailed throughout the Yemeni homeland on this occasion, the masses of the people were surprised at the refusal of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] leadership to return to the capital of the homeland and to convene the state legislative and executive institutions to embark on the practical implementation of the document provisions. Instead of showing concern for the immediate implementation of the document following its signing, the YSP leadership paid visits abroad that were not agreed on and without the knowledge of the state presidency or the Foreign Ministry which are charged by the Constitution with running the foreign affairs of the Republic of Yemen.

This shows that the YSP leadership is not interested in the immediate implementation of the pledge and accord document. Instead of ending the crisis, this would further escalate it and continue its dangers despite the fact that all have agreed that the signing of the pledge and accord document came to put an end to the crisis and to immediately move to the practical implementation of all provisions of the pledge and accord document.

As we reiterate our full concern to develop and reinforce the ties of fraternity, cordiality, and joint cooperation between the Republic of Yemen and all its sisterly and friendly states; and as we reiterate our commitment to expand these relations—despite all that could be created by the contacts of the YSP leadership—any effort that does not stem from constitutional legitimacy and common responsibility cannot yield fruit.

As we greatly appreciate the good intentions with which these sisterly countries welcomed some leaders of the YSP, proceeding from their strong fraternal relations with the Republic of Yemen, this stand by the party blatantly conflicts with the interests of the homeland and with the provisions of the pledge and accord document. This also coincides with the military escalation represented by moving the al-Wahdah Brigade from the Hadramaut Governorate and the subsequent move of 30 tanks from the city of Aden to the Abyan Governorate which took place on 21 February. This is despite the fact that instructions and orders have been issued by the chairman of the Presidential Council and the supreme commander of the Armed Forces not to move any military units in compliance with the Constitution and

the provisions of the pledge and accord document to save the citizens of the Abyan Governorate from the suffering they have been experiencing as a result of this military escalation.

All this confirms the existence of premeditated intentions aimed at foiling the implementation of the pledge and accord document and at obstructing all good offices aimed at ending the bloodshed, protecting the unity, and reinforcing democracy. This also reiterates the existence of these premeditated intentions before and after the final signing of the document as well as the objective of harming the homeland's unity, sovereignty, security, and stability.

This requires all members of our people, our Armed Forces, and security organs to be on maximum alert to prevent the realization of these suspicious intentions that are covered by a media campaign, which employs deception and trickery, and incites sectarian, fractional, and tribal problems aimed to divide Yemen after this great unionist achievement was realized for our people on 22 May 1990 in a peaceful and democratic manner.

The document of pledge and accord emphasized that its implementation requires a strong political will that is united in words and deeds, fulfillment of promises, honesty, and commitment. All of this urges everybody to respect the responsibility of their signatures before the public opinion inside and abroad.

Regrettably, we see the YSP's leadership behaving in a different manner than what had been agreed on. Since the first moments after the signing ceremony in Amman, this leadership followed a policy based on disavowal of the pledge and accord document and disassociating itself from commitment to the people's collective will and the democratic option. This behavior harms the unity of the homeland and people at present and in the future.

Our national duties and responsibilities call on us to continue to adhere to unity and democracy, and to inform the masses and all political parties and organizations, scholars, and social figures of the seriousness of the current situation, for which the YSP's leadership bears complete responsibility since the beginning of the crisis on 19 August 1993. This leadership practically emphasizes its rejection to commit itself to the document of pledge and accord, and its insistence on escalating the crisis and situation, and on keeping the country suffering from the political crisis. This will only serve the enemies of unity and democracy.

We will not spare any effort to keep the public opinion informed of all facts and developments.

We pray God to guide all to the right path, He is the best Lord and supporter.

Wrapup of Clash Events; Efforts To End Conflict**Council Urges Adherence to Accord**

JN2302151794 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] The Presidential Council met under Presidential Council Chairman brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih yesterday evening. The Council reviewed the topics listed on its agenda, foremost among which was the accord document signed in Amman, the capital of fraternal Jordan, on the 10th of the blessed month of Ramadan.

The Presidential Council blessed the signing of the accord document and commended the efforts made by the Political Forces Dialogue Committee to draft the document. Moreover, the Council underlined the importance of the commitment by all to honor the letter and spirit of the accord document. The Council noted that this requires the convening of meetings by the state's constitutional institutions, which are charged with implementing this document, particularly since this document, which is binding on all, is supposed to have resolved all political, media, and military aspects of the crisis. The convening of such meetings is part of the constitutional responsibilities that must be shouldered in unison. There should be no attempts to evade or slacken off on the part of anyone, the Council maintained.

The Council also expressed its immense appreciation to fraternal Jordan—king, government, and people—for hosting the signing ceremony. It also commended the fraternal efforts made by His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal to safeguard Yemen's unity and end all manifestations of the political crisis. Furthermore, the Council praised the efforts and good offices extended by brothers and friends to enable our country to cope with the tough challenges posed by the continuation of the political crisis.

The Presidential Council underscored the need for everyone to adhere to this historic national document agreed to by the Political Forces Dialogue Committee with a strong national spirit grounded in the certain basic constants, foremost among which are the following:

- Islam is a creed and a law,
- Unity must be safeguarded,
- Democracy must be protected,
- There must be compliance with the Constitution,
- The base of popular participation in the decision-making process must be broadened,
- Violence must be renounced,
- Dialogue must be used as a civilized mode of behavior to resolve all disputes.

Rival Troops on 'High Alert'

NC2302150094 Paris AFP in English 1404 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Sanaa, Feb 23 (AFP)—Rival troops were on high alert east of the port city of Aden Wednesday, as the authorities in former North and South Yemen engaged in a war of words following clashes in which at least 20 were reported killed.

A spokesman for the Aden-based Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) accused troops from the north of having "extended their deployment beyond the Abyan region" about 100 kilometres (62 miles) east of Aden.

Southern forces were preparing to "resist the armed aggression," the spokesman said, adding that northern forces, including the Republican Guard, had also been redeployed along the former north-south border, facing southern troops.

Meanwhile, Salim Salih Muhammad, a southern member of Yemen's presidential council, told the official UAE news agency WAM that Vice-President 'Ali Salim al-Bid would "not go to Sanaa in the current security situation, before troops have been withdrawn from Yemeni towns." al-Bid was due back in Yemen later Wednesday.

The YSP said Tuesday the northern al-'Amaliqah brigade ambushed and killed 15 southern soldiers in Abyan, endangering a reconciliation agreement between north and south signed in Amman on Sunday. In Sanaa, officials of President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's General People's Congress (GPC) said two soldiers were killed and 20 wounded on both sides.

On Monday seven were reported killed in clashes between troops from north and south. The two armies have not been merged since the country was unified in May 1990.

Salih and al-Bid signed a deal in Amman on Sunday to end a political crisis which has paralysed Yemen since al-Bid refused to take up his duties as vice-president in Sanaa in August, demanding major economic, political and military reforms.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Muhammad Basindwah denounced southern leaders on Wednesday for visiting neighbouring Gulf states, saying they were trying to gain support in the crisis.

"The moves by southern leaders are a continuation of the undeclared secessionist policies practised since last August," Basindwah told the Kuwaiti newspaper al-Siyasah.

Southerner Salim Salih Muhammad rejected Basindwah's comments as "baseless" and said the officials were touring Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to explain the Amman accord and patch up relations which were soured by Yemen's perceived support for Iraq in the 1991 Gulf war.

Basindwah also said Yemen was keen to have good relations with Gulf countries "and hopes those countries will realise the importance of not allowing any party to drag them over to its side."

He was commenting on al-Bid's visits to Saudi Arabia and Oman, just after he signed the reconciliation agreement with Salih.

al-Bid, who heads the YSP, met King Fahd of Saudi Arabia for the first time since the end of the Gulf war. The two leaders appeared on television in the region shaking hands and smiling.

Salim Salih Muhammad travelled to Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where he briefed leaders on the Amman accord, brokered by King Husayn of Jordan.

The reconciliation accord called for constitutional reforms, an improvement of security and the withdrawal of military checkpoints from cities.

Prime Minister Notes Casualties

JN2302163594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1520 GMT
23 Feb 94

[Text] Sanaa, 23 Feb (INA)—A source from the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] today accused northern Yemeni forces, including the al-'Amaliqah brigade, of continuing to expand and deploy to confront southern forces close to the border between the two parts of Yemen. In a statement over Aden television a short while ago, the source said that the southern forces have been defending their positions since last night.

The source said that the al-'Amaliqah forces, the presidential guard, the central security forces, and other units are still expanding and deploying in three border areas of Sabil Yahya, al-'Raqla, and Saqab [names as received] in Abyan Governorate in the direction of the al-Dali' border area.

The source said armed clashes took place between the al-'Amaliqah brigade and the southern Madram [name as received] brigade and the 39th infantry battalion stationed 100 km from al-'Amaliqah. He said the southern units are still repelling the al-'Amaliqah attack that began last night. The source did not mention human or material losses sustained during the clashes.

On another level, Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas has announced that the recent Abyan military clashes have resulted in a number of casualties among the Yemeni Armed Forces.

In remarks upon arrival in Aden from the Sultanate of Oman today, al-'Attas said that the recent military incidents have escalated the Yemeni crisis to an unprecedented level. He said: "We did not expect such a thing from our brothers," alluding to north Yemen with which an agreement was signed in Amman recently.

Al-'Attas said that there is no way out of this crisis except by adhering to dialogue and by strict compliance with what has been agreed upon.

Denounces Clashes in Abyan

EA2302224394 Aden Yemeni Republic Radio Network
in English 1600 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, returned back home at dawn today on his way back from Hashimite Jordanian capital, Amman, accompanied by brothers Fadl Muhsin 'Abdallah, the minister of fisheries and member of the Dialogue Committee; Jarallah 'Umar, minister of culture and tourism and member of the Dialogue Committee; Salih Mutran, member of the Council of Deputies and member of the Dialogue Committee, after the delegation accompanying him and participated in the ceremony of signing the accord document.

Upon his return to Aden, brother Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas delivered a statement to the Yemeni news agency, SABA, in which he said: The signing of the accord document for building the Yemeni state represented a good and important step along the road for overpassing the political, economic, and social crisis which our country is living. We were looking during the signing of the accord document in the Jordanian capital, Amman, that this will reflect itself positively, particularly on the level of the military situation.

But, contrary to this, we were appalled with regrettable incidents which Abyan Governorate witnessed and which took the lives of a number of the sons of our armed forces and which led to the raising of the level of tension to a level not preceded before. He added, saying: We denounce this action which we did not expect from the brothers following the signing of the accord document. We renew the emphasis for our absolute refusal to be dragged into such acts. In the same time, we have confidence in our people's capability of refusing and curbing these acts. We emphasize in this context that there is no way out of the situation for Yemen except through dialogue and the commitment towards this document.

Council of Ministers Notes Situation

JN2302180594 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network
in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] The Council of Ministers held its periodic meeting this afternoon under the chairmanship of First Deputy Prime Minister brother Dr. Hasan Makki. After reviewing the decisions it made during its previous meetings, the council discussed topics on its agenda and was briefed by the interior minister on the security situation in the country.

The interior minister cited the need to promote the ministry's efforts to maintain general security, stability, and peace of mind in the society. He also stressed that the ministry would exert every effort to prevent anything

that disturbs security and stability. The council also discussed several issues listed on its agenda and adopted suitable decisions and measures.

Troops Ordered Back to Barracks

JN2302201694 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has ordered Defense Minister Haytham Qasim Tahir to return the southern troops deployed in the Abyan area, east of Aden, to their barracks in Hadhramaut in the east. In a message to the defense minister, President Salih ordered his defense minister to ban armed flights without a prior agreement with the chief of staff and the higher commander of the Yemeni Armed Forces.

In his message, the Yemeni president stressed that moving a military unit from one place to another without a regular approval by the higher commander of the Armed Forces constitutes a violation of the Constitution and the document of accord, which was signed in Amman last Sunday to end the political crisis in the country.

YSP Official Links Reform Grouping to Assassinations

JN2402113394 Amman AL-AHALI in Arabic 24 Feb 94 p 4

[By Ramadan al-Rawashidah and Muhammad Farhan]

[Excerpts] Political parties participating in the Yemeni coalition government, and Yemeni party figures signed the pledge and accord document in Amman on 20 February under the sponsorship of his Majesty King Husayn.

Hundreds of Yemeni and Arab political figures came to Amman to participate in the signing ceremony and to witness it.

AL-AHALI covered the event and interviewed Salim Salih Muhammad, member of the Yemeni Presidential Council and assistant secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP]. [passage omitted]

On the series of assassinations of YSP officials, Salim Salih Muhammad said the party that carried out the assassinations is the Jihad organization, an organization sponsored by the Yemeni Reform Grouping. Some of these elements returned from Afghanistan and were identified. They were identified only in the areas where we are present, he said. We supplied all the information needed concerning their activities and they were arrested. Others are still at large in Sanas and the tribal areas. Some tribes and shaykhs are protecting them, not to mention some influential armed forces officers.

Muhammad added: That's why the first point of the document dealt with addressing the security situation, and arresting the culprits and bringing them to trial. He said: We do not pass judgment in advance. We leave this to the courts to decide.

Muhammad added that the security issue is now the major concern of the people. One week ago, oil companies and embassies gave us information on terrorist operations to take place in the southern areas, particularly attacks against oil facilities.

Salim Salih Muhammad admitted that some documents show that this scheme and those responsible for it are connected to Usamah Bin-Ladin, a Saudi national who is now in Sudan. Usamah Bin-Ladin is known for his support for fundamentalist movements, particularly those returning from Afghanistan.

Muhammad added: I told the U.S. ambassador that you nurtured these terrorists and used them at a certain time to confront the liberation movements, nationalist regimes, and the socialist bloc. Now they have turned against you.

Muhammad said: Our stand in the YSP on terrorism is firm. We are against it, against exporting it, and against all the forms it may take, whether ideological or any other form. [passage omitted]

'Udayy Reportedly Criticizes Foreign Ministry

JN2302194994 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] 'Udayy, the son of the tyrant Saddam, has leveled direct criticism at his father's foreign policy apparatus, which is run by the crusader Tariq Hanna 'Aziz. 'Udayy, the failure, said in an article published in his own paper, BABIL, that his father's regime should not rely on its current foreign policy to lift or ease the international sanctions, saying that the regime did not obtain anything from the United Nations in exchange for the [word indistinct] overflights over Iraq and the imposition of long-term monitoring of its installations.

Observers think that 'Udayy is trying to hold the Foreign Ministry responsible for Saddam's follies. He also attributed the slump in the Iraqi dinar to the [word indistinct] ministry.

'Udayy's criticism comes in the wake of rumors that Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf will be dismissed from the Foreign Minister's post in a new cabinet reshuffle.

Foreign Minister on UN Resolutions, Blockade

NC2402071094 Doha Qatar Television Service in Arabic 18 Feb 94

[Interview with Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf by 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sayyid in Baghdad; date not given; from a Qatari Television program on Iraq]

[Text] [Al-Sayyid] Welcome, minister.

[Al-Sahhaf] Welcome to you.

[Al-Sayyid] Minister, the Security Council says that Iraq has not yet implemented every Security Council resolution relating to the Gulf war. What is your comment on this?

[Al-Sahhaf] If we discuss Iraq's implementation of the obligations imposed on it by Resolution 687 accurately, we will notice—even those hostile to Iraq and the Arabs cannot deny this—that Iraq has met most of the obligations imposed on it by this resolution. The other issues do not require practical implementation, but compliance. And Iraq has announced that it complies with them. So talk of Iraq not complying with the Security Council resolutions is inaccurate and has political objectives. The clear answer is that Iraq has honored what is contained in this resolution. Section C of this particular resolution deals with the need for Iraq to get rid of the mass destruction weapons. In this regard, Iraq possesses no such weapons and has no capability to manufacture them. So why keep repeating that Iraq is not complying? The logical answer, no matter what side you are on, is that there are political reasons for maintaining the blockade of Iraq and keeping up the hostile campaign against Iraq. This is primarily because this crisis and this war have goals that are greater than, goals that have nothing to do with what is being alleged, that is, that it is

about Kuwait. The foreign parties within the Security Council, chiefly the United States, have political objectives that have nothing to do with the crisis. Now that Iraq has implemented the obligations imposed on it by this resolution, they have started to implement the objectives of their policies in the region. It is no longer an issue of the resolutions in connection with this crisis. We have complied with and honored Iraq's obligations and continue to cooperate in terms of the details relating to all the clauses that require measures under Section C. By accepting Resolution 715, there is nothing left, but the technical details of the long-term monitoring.

[Al-Sayyid] Minister, there is a Security Council resolution that calls on Iraq to export limited amounts of its oil to meet its basic needs, such as buying food and medicine. But Iraq refuses to implement this resolution. What is Iraq's justification for refusing to implement this resolution?

[Al-Sahhaf] You mean Resolution 706, don't you?

[Al-Sayyid] Yes.

[Al-Sahhaf] The background of Resolution 706 is that Prince Sadruddin Agha Khan, a special representative of the UN secretary general, has come to Iraq as part of the job of the UN General Secretariat and the UN secretary general to examine the so-called humanitarian situation in Iraq and Kuwait. The team working under Prince Sadruddin Agha Khan carried out studies relating to the serious humanitarian situation resulting from the war that destroyed much of the civilian facilities in the cities and even villages, such as projects for drinking water, sewage, fuel, hospitals, etc. Those people submitted reports giving a realistic picture of the humanitarian situation that became a threat to the lives of millions.

In this report—this study—they urged prompt action to enable Iraq to provide the necessary services such as health, water, and sewage. They specified the utilities concerned, including potable water, sewage, and agriculture. The report was sent to New York but instead of responding to Sadruddin Agha Khan's appeal, the Americans and their allies turned the affair into a political game. They referred the whole issue to a resolution adopted in line with the UN Charter's Chapter 7 but still claimed that they were acting in line with humanitarian concerns. Chapter 7 deals with the measures the UN Security Council can adopt to maintain security and peace when a situation threatening world security and peace arises, including issues of nuclear armament and violent strife. They sought to govern humanitarian requests dealing with sewage and hygiene in line with Chapter 7.

They said that Iraq could export oil worth \$1.6 billion. But they said they wanted to station inspectors inside the Iraqi oil marketing authority. When an oil importer comes to buy, say a Netherlands buyer or the Netherlands Government, the inspectors would take part in the negotiations over the transaction. They could say: Sorry, we will not permit this transaction. Let's suppose the

deal is carried through. The contract to sell the oil would go to New York and would be submitted to the sanctions committee, which might not permit the deal. Suppose the sanctions committee agreed, they would want to station inspectors at the loading terminals, for example the deep water al-Bakr Port. We export our oil via the Arab Gulf. They would want to station inspectors at the deep water al-Bakr Port. One inspector might say he won't allow the deal to go through and that he believes the Iraqis are cheating on the quality of the oil. He might ask that a tanker already loaded with oil be unloaded. Let's suppose the tanker leaves the port and the cargo is sold. As soon as the oil is sold, the proceeds will be taken from Iraq and placed in a closed account with the UN secretary general, who is empowered to release funds from it, not Iraq.

Let us suppose Iraq accepts this too, it must then submit a list of its needs including potatoes, rice, and sugar to the sanctions committee. The committee would then say it does not approve of so much rice for the Iraqis and would want a smaller quantity. It would make the decisions, not us. Let us suppose they accepted the list of commodities, they would want to appoint overseers [preceding word in English] who would decide where Iraq would buy the rice, say from Thailand. They would want to inspect the rice and state whether they would approve its purchase or not. Let us suppose they approved it, they would put a Security Council stamp on it. Let us suppose they did so, they would then monitor the transporting ship. Suppose we want this shipment to arrive via al-Aqabah, they would want to station inspectors in al-Aqabah to see if it is the same rice. They would want to station inspectors on the border and in Baghdad. When the rice reached the outskirts of Baghdad, they would ask to see the warehouses where it was going to be stored. They would see them. They would then ask to be informed where we want to distribute it. We would for example tell them: Babil Governorate. They would go to supervise operations in Babil. Who would be selling it? Say, for example, 11,000 food commodity agents in a governorate of 1.5 million people. They would want to go and watch how those 11,000 agents sell the rice. This resolution was not adopted to ease the Iraqi people's hardships. It was a political resolution designed to provoke. They claim they have given Iraq a chance that Iraq has declined to use. It follows then that the Iraqi Government does not want to feed its people. If you examined the conditions they have set, you would not only reject them, but would lose faith in these people as human beings. The objective is a political one. We told them: Although you turned Prince Sadruddin Agha Khan's report upside down and transformed its humanitarian objective into a colonialist scheme, you must feel that this resolution cannot be implemented. This is because when you drafted it and had it issued by the Security Council, you had a political objective. Because of your erroneous information, you imagined that if you pressured the Iraqis in this manner, they would proclaim their surrender and invite you to colonize them as you wished. This erroneous interpretation of affairs led to

the adoption of an ugly resolution that cannot be implemented. We explained that in a clear, calm manner.

After that, they sent us UN Assistant Secretary General Kofi Annan, who is from Africa. He told us: We know that this resolution is not applicable in the first place. We asked technical experts and they said the resolution is not applicable. We are prepared to hold talks with you to reach a reasonable formula [words indistinct].

We held three rounds of negotiations in Vienna. We would have reached an agreement each time, but when the UN delegation returned to New York, the U.S. ambassador would find fault with it and say: Why did you do this? How could you agree with the Iraqis on this? No, we do not concur, we have this condition and that one.

The talks would then stop, and the United Nations would come later to propose new talks. This we did, and the same story happened, and it happened a third time in Vienna. The talks then stopped.

Recently, UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali renewed the idea. An Iraqi delegation went to New York and they discussed the issue. Still, the UN General Assembly delegation had no flexibility, not even half of the flexibility that existed in the Vienna talks. I sent a message to the UN general secretary telling him... [pauses] By then, that is, in the fourth round of talks, we had made major progress with the Special Commission and Ambassador Ekeus. We had agreed that only the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 remained after we accepted Resolution 715 on future monitoring.

I said in my message to the UN secretary general that we believe we were very close to the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687. This paragraph calls for lifting the embargo on Iraq's exports in general. The paragraph is permanent and better than a temporary one. You know that Resolution 706 is valid for six months and is renewable.

So, we propose that we concentrate our efforts on reaching and implementing Paragraph 22, and consequently lifting the embargo on the export of Iraqi oil. I proposed, as an interim formula, that Iraq be allowed to export an amount of oil in accordance with a formula that guarantees the UN's ability to know the amount sold and the price. The UN will take its share for the reparations fund and the rest will go to Iraq to buy [food and medicines]. The agreement was (?public), and we even made this proposal: If some sides claim that we may use this little amount of money to buy things other than food and medicine, then we propose that we buy from the markets of Security Council members. If we buy from the markets of the 15 Security Council members, then nothing will remain hidden. They gave no answer. Now, we are concentrating on reaching Paragraph 22, which is better.

[Al-Sayyid] Mr. Minister, you said that part of the Iraqi oil revenues, when exported, will be deposited into the reparation fund. How does Iraq view the issue of compensations, especially of those harmed by the Gulf war?

[Al-Sakhaf] Iraq is the biggest victim of the events and the American-Atlantic aggression. When we accepted Resolution 687, and before that the other resolutions, we accepted the principle of compensations in accordance with the rules of international law. This is our position: Compensation in accordance with international law.

[Al-Sayyid] Your Excellency, does Iraq expect the blockade to be partially or completely lifted in the foreseeable future?

[Al-Sakhaf] We are working toward complete implementation of Paragraph 22. Logic dictates this. The sound thing to do is to finish work along with the Security Council to implement Paragraph 22 without either party adding any political conditions to this paragraph. The text is very clear. There are requirements that should be met to implement this text. These requirements provide that in accordance with the mission assigned them, envoy Ekrou—the executive chairman of the Security Council ad hoc committee—and Hans Blix—the IAEA director general—submit a report to the Security Council notifying it that Iraq has fulfilled its commitments outlined in the (new) section, namely Paragraphs 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13. We are now very close to this goal. We will work with the ad hoc committee and the IAEA to work out the technical formulas to start implementing the control programs in accordance with Resolution 715. Consequently, the Security Council will be dutybound to implement Paragraph [word indistinct]

[Al-Sayyid] Your Excellency, another issue that pertains to the ceasefire in the Gulf War is the demarcation of borders between the Republic of Iraq and the State of Kuwait. We would like to know Iraq's justifications for refraining from demarcation of the borders with Kuwait despite the Security Council resolution passed on the issue and despite the fact that an Iraqi representative attended some meetings on the issue under the auspices of the United Nations.

[Al-Sakhaf] We have not signed [on the demarcation of borders]. The paragraphs of Resolution 687 require compliance; that is, there is nothing we can do. They went and demarcated the borders in accordance with the Security Council resolutions. They laid down the bases for the demarcation and that is that. Land has been taken from a number of farmers according to the new border line. Iraqi territories and homes were taken from their owners. These people are (vacating) the area [words indistinct]. There is a difference. When they ask me if I have something that I must get rid of, for instance, they said that we have chemical weapons. We said yes, here they are. They said that these weapons must be destroyed. Alright, they will be destroyed. Regarding the issue you have raised, there is no measure or function left for us to do. They want us to comply. When we agreed on

Resolution 687, it meant that we complied. They should not have asked anything more.

[Al-Sayyid] What is your view on this issue?

[Al-Sakhaf] I have no other comment. We are now discussing the issue as a whole between Iraq and the Security Council. When there is a paragraph that requires a certain measure and agreement is reached on the measure, we do what is required. All paragraphs require compliance, and nothing else. All that they demand of us is compliance. Iraq has done nothing indicating it is not complying. On the contrary: There are very clear examples showing we are complying, such as the farmers and their lands, the people living in the border area and their homes, our problems, and territory. These Iraqis left their land and homes.

[Al-Sayyid] There is also the issue of Kuwaiti POW's. Kuwait says that Iraq has been holding more than 600 people since the Iraqi forces entered Kuwait in August 1990. Iraq, through contacts by the Arab League, the United Nations, and other world organizations, maintains that it does not hold Kuwaitis. What is your comment on this issue?

[Al-Sakhaf] I have no comment. I myself said this at the Arab League and at the United Nations. I stated this fact. There are no Kuwaiti detainees in Iraq. There is absolutely not one Kuwaiti behind bars in Iraq. After the aggression against Iraq stopped, Iraq handed over the POW's it had, be they Kuwaitis, Americans, French, Saudis, or others. We handed them over through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). However, there are a number of Kuwaitis who live in Iraq. They still live in Iraq. If you travel in Iraq you can see and perhaps meet Kuwaitis who still live in Iraq. There are some Kuwaitis in Iraq. Some of them are called Bidun [Kuwaitis without Kuwaiti nationality], and other Kuwaitis. They still live in Iraq. Some of them have shops or homes and others have relatives or clans in Iraq. [words indistinct] We asked them to register their names with the ICRC, because maybe some of them want to return to Kuwait. Indeed, many of them wish to return to Kuwait. The Kuwaitis said that Iraq has Kuwaiti POW's and detainees. They said that the first list includes 7,000 or 7,400. We said that [words indistinct] and that they are mistaken.

After a while, they said no, we are wrong; what you have are 6,000 and something, and they presented a new list. We told them the same thing and repeated that we do not have them; we said that some names were included in the previous list you talked about. They said no; the real number is 5,000 and something. In this way, we have received seven lists through the Red Cross. The number boiled down to 622. Who are they? If you look at their personal files you will find someone named so and so, who is the son of so and so, and who was seen at a supermarket in Kuwait—say in al-Salmiyah area or some other place—and after that nothing is known about him. How could you be so inaccurate as to presume that

this person is in Iraq? There is a specific method followed in such cases. There is an internationally recognized method according to which the Red Cross gives out application forms and procedures. So it is a question of missing persons. Didn't they call it Desert Storm? This storm took many people; Iraqis, Kuwaitis, and other human beings. So we are facing a question of missing persons, not prisoners deliberately captured by the Iraqi troops or Iraqi authorities and taken to jail and whom we refuse to release. This is a lie. This is a game usually played in times of crisis to keep the atmosphere tense and keep a standing accusation, so that someone can come to you and tell you: Brother, why are you doing this? This is a natural human reaction. Why keep them? They have families and they are miserable. Thus, an atmosphere of tension against Iraq will remain. This is the whole idea. Look at what they are doing now, for instance. Kuwaiti television signs off with prayers that say: May God return our prisoners to us. In their prayers, they write: Do not forget our prisoners, and so on. When they go to a meeting they deliberately start a discussion on the subject so as to create certain feelings and to gain sympathy for political reasons. The fact of the matter is that we have to work to gather information on people who have gone missing and whose whereabouts we should ascertain. They talk and present personal files of 622 or a similar figure. We will present files on about 63,000 missing Iraqis. Sixty-three thousand Iraqis. We will present them through the Red Cross. You know that whenever crises and armed struggles take place, [pauses] ... Even up to today, the Americans are running around looking for the missing in action [previous three words in English] in Vietnam. Do they want by this game to keep... [sentence incomplete as heard] This is governed by rules that are recognized internationally and are sponsored by the ICRC and we proceed according to these rules. We have received personal files of missing people. Enough lying to people and saying that there are prisoners held by Iraq. There are missing people and we all have to cooperate to learn their whereabouts. Those among the missing people who have files and are accounted for, as the Kuwaitis admit, are 600 or 622 persons. We will present 63,000 Iraqi files to the ICRC. From the first moment we have shown full readiness to cooperate in this regard—and not only with the ICRC—to track down these people, where they are, how, and what happened to them. In short, to search in every possible way. In addition, we have stated that we are ready to cooperate unconditionally with the Arab League. We have received two envoys: Rashid Idris and 'Abdallah Adam before him. We will receive a third envoy, Mayhab al-Mayhubi, Arab League Assistant Secretary General. You brothers in Qatar know that we have welcomed proposals from the Gulf. Do it any way you want. You may set up a committee from all the Gulf countries, except for the Kuwaiti Government. You may set up this committee and bring people from the Kuwaiti parliament, because they do not tell the truth. You may bring people from the Kuwaiti parliament. You will be most welcome to come, see, investigate, and search and we will open all doors for you. They proposed a popular

committee, and we said a popular committee is fine and welcome. His Majesty King Hassan has raised the possibility, and we said welcome. Very briefly, usually after conflicts a search is mounted for missing persons, and we cooperate in this regard without any conditions.

[Al-Sayyid] How does Iraq view current developments in the Middle East, particularly the political settlement in the Middle East, and the Declaration of Principles, the Gaza-Jericho agreement between the PLO and Israel, and the political settlement plan between Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon and Israel?

[Al-Sabbah] The developments in the Arab region do not inspire optimism because of the actual strategic situation and the imbalance in the international situation which increased foreign domination of the region. The available opportunities for Arab countries to defend their rights and pan-Arab rights are very limited. Therefore, I believe that overall developments do not serve pan-Arab interests. We are not concerned with the other details you mentioned.

[Al-Sayyid] Since we are discussing the settlement plan in the Middle East, do you see a role for Iraq in this plan, especially since news agencies recently referred to a plan to resettle a portion of the Palestinians in Arab countries, including Iraq? What is your response to this issue?

[Al-Sabbah] This is nonsense. You know the extent of Zionism's control of the media, news agencies, particularly in the Western world. This is part of the psychological warfare against the Arabs. It is nonsense intended to confuse readers, viewers, and listeners. We are absolutely not and will never be involved in this plan. We worked within the framework of the Arab League and within its sole terms of reference, namely, the Arab summit resolutions. We have nothing else to add.

[Al-Sayyid] How does Iraq view the Gulf Cooperation Council after approximately 3 and 1/2 years since the Gulf events? What is your view of Gulf security?

[Al-Sabbah] In the summer of 1991, more than one statement was made by Iraq affirming that Iraq welcomes any Arab country that is prepared to continue joint Arab action and cooperation to serve the mutual interests and rightful issues for which we all work. This applies to all Arabs and certainly to Iraq's ties with its brothers in the Gulf. We have not changed and will not change regarding this issue. We welcome any relations based on common understanding of safeguarding and promoting our interests and any voluntary agreement by the fraternal Arab countries to serve their interests. Iraq's stance on this issue is very clear. We are happy that Iraq and Qatar have maintained a useful and practical level of fraternal relations. Casual crises do not affect these ties. Ties remain and crises vanish. In fact, this stance is not casual but firm and Iraq will continue to adopt it sincerely and with honest intentions and

without discrimination. Brothers experience deep differences and encounter difficult times, but blood never turns into water. The genuine interests among us remain stronger than casual crises.

[Al-Sayyid] Concerning the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] which, in addition to Iraq, includes Jordan, Yemen, and the Arab Republic of Egypt, some coolness has affected the relations among these countries since the Gulf crisis. What about this group? Will these countries resume their cooperation?

[Al-Sahhaf] It is difficult to speculate on this now. The actual situation is that the ACC is frozen. It appears to me to be suspended. What things will be like, it is really difficult to speculate on, at least for the near future. Originally it was a good step but the crisis halted it. We will see how things turn out.

[Al-Sayyid] Mr. Minister, let us move on now to the future relations between Iraq and its neighbors, particularly Turkey and Iran. Your Excellency, how do you view future relations with these countries?

[Al-Sahhaf] We earnestly wish to do what we can to create a climate that will encourage our non-Arab neighbors—Iran and Turkey—to move toward a normalization of relations. This is especially important in the case of Iran following a bloody eight-year war. We are seeking to normalize ties and build a sound foundation that benefits from the lessons learned from the crisis and to create opportunities of stability and cooperation for the Iraqi and Iranian nations in a way that is to their mutual good. We have tried to do this in the past and we are still trying. We are always urging Iran to begin settling certain unresolved issues between us, foremost among them the POW issue and MIA issue and also the retrieval of the remains of such MIA's. We also wish to cooperate in connection with the issue of nonintervention, including crossing the border and infiltrations. We also would like both parties to fulfill certain commitments to each other. For example, the Iranians gave safe haven to a number of Iraqi aircraft. They must now return these planes, both the civilian and military ones. There are several other issues that are ready for settlement if the necessary steps are taken. These would be steps illustrating normal transactions between neighboring countries. During meetings in Karachi and New York, I agreed with Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati to adopt a policy that would lead to the results I have outlined above. This policy would involve an exchange of visits, holding meetings, and beginning a political dialogue. We made the first steps but later the atmosphere became a bit muddled. We hope to resume this effort soon. We might meet in Geneva to begin discussing the POW issue.

[Al-Sayyid] Dear viewers, at the end of this interview we express our profound thanks to His Excellency Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf. Thank you, Minister. We hope your efforts will succeed, God willing.

[Al-Sahhaf] You are most welcome.

Saddam Chairs Ba'th Party Iraq Command Meeting

JN2302141794 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1340 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Feb (INA)—His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, secretary of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, presided here yesterday over a meeting of the Iraq Command.

Presidential Office Chief Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi attended.

Military Official Denies Reports of Draft

JN2402091894 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0815 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Feb (INA)—Staff Lieutenant General Ahmad Ibrahim Hammash, assistant to the chief of staff of the army for administration, has denied imperialist and Zionist propaganda about drafting reserves or disbanding others who have completed their compulsory service.

In a statement to AL-QADISIYAH published today, the assistant to the chief of staff said those conscripts born in 1973 and who have completed their service will be released in three groups in accordance with a timetable. He said that reports of a draft of new reserves are baseless.

Saddam City Residents March To Protest Embargo

JN2302164394 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1530 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] The masses of Saddam City have condemned the continued enforcement of the unfair embargo clamped on the children, women, and elderly in Iraq.

In a massive march sponsored by the Central People's Council of the Saddam City [Ba'th Party] branch, the masses of the city marched toward the UN office in Baghdad, reiterating their unwavering support for the unique leadership of leader President Saddam Husayn and their constant willingness to offer sacrifices in defense of great Iraq and the accomplishments of the glorious 17-30 July revolution.

The marchers handed the resident representative of the United Nations Development Program in Baghdad a memorandum addressed to the UN secretary general demanding an end to the unfair embargo clamped on the mujahid Iraqi people.

**Columnist Slams UN Human Rights Envoy's
'Allegations'**

JN2302165894 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
17 Feb 94 p 7

["Sidelines" column by Sabri Hammadi: "Van Der Stoel,
the Reckless!"]

[Text] Since being informed of his appointment to report on Iraqi human rights, Van Der Stoel has not left the United Nations in peace. He has appeared overly enthusiastic about his mission, rash and reckless in his behavior and statements, and unusually unbalanced. These actions have irritated the UN secretary general, prompting him to strongly criticize Van Der Stoel's actions and tell the ambassadors of the four big powers at a meeting once that he knows Van Der Stoel personally, as a classmate, and that he knows the man is "reckless and unobjective."

This, then, is Van Der Stoel; reckless and unobjective as certified by UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Ghali himself. This is why Van Der Stoel has not stopped creating furors and fabricating false allegations against Iraq.

This is not all Butrus-Ghali said about Van Der Stoel. He also added: "Van Der Stoel thinks that Iraqi human rights issue is the only human rights issue in the world!"

So why does this Dutch crow keep squawking and lamenting Iraqi human rights, and why doesn't he also mention Western imperialism's violation of these rights?

What is the secret behind Van Der Stoel's reckless, unobjective, and unusually enthusiastic attitude toward the so-called Iraqi human rights issue?

We the Iraqis, who have not appointed Van Der Stoel to defend our rights, and who refuse to have this reckless man as our trustee, have the right to assume that Van Der Stoel has received \$1 million, or a sum close to that figure, from the Al Sabah and Al Sa'ud families. We must assume that it is this money that has made him reckless and overly enthusiastic to the point of losing his balance and objectivity and behaving in this irresponsible way.

It is also our right to assume that Van Der Stoel has come under pressure from the Zionist lobby, and that it is this lobby that is manipulating him and pushing him to cause problems and make baseless accusations.

In short, we refuse to have this reckless and unobjective character as trustee of our rights. Besides, who told them that our rights need a reporter or a defender?!

Rabin on Timeline for Withdrawal, Final Accord

Withdrawal To Take Place 'Soon'

LD2302125594 Lisbon Radio Renascenca in Portuguese to Europe 1130 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Excerpt] [Portuguese] Prime Minister Silva and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin are at the moment giving a press conference. The Middle East peace process and the withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho are obviously key points of this visit. Raquel Abecassis reports:

[Abecassis] Silva began by congratulating Rabin for being a peacemaker in the Middle East. The Israeli Prime Minister responded by thanking Silva and stressed the importance of Silva's visit to Israel in October 1992. Rabin described it as a very important landmark in the development of bilateral relations between the two countries. Then the two prime ministers went on to speak of the excellent economic, and other, relations between the two countries. Rabin is at the moment answering questions. The first question was whether he would confirm reports that the Israeli government was willing to withdraw from the occupied territories of Gaza and Jericho within two weeks. Rabin said that the process was still under way, he added an agreement on the type of autonomy had not yet been reached but he stated that the withdrawal would take place soon but not in the next two weeks. [passage omitted]

Three Months 'Reasonable' for Final Accord

LD2302133794 Lisbon RDP Antena 1 Radio Network in Portuguese 1200 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Portuguese] Prime Minister Silva spoke of bilateral relations, which in the last few years have enjoyed a significant boost. He noted that trade has increased by 30 percent. Silva went on to mention the negotiations between Israel and the European Union. He advocated an identical accord to that in force with the European Free Trade Association countries.

Prime Minister Rabin said he did not believe that the Israeli troop withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho would take place in the next two weeks as it had been reported. Rabin is optimistic but said the next three months was a more reasonable period for a final accord.

Withdrawal Accord in 'Less Than 3 Months'

LD2302162294 Lisbon RDP Antena 1 Radio Network in Portuguese 1500 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] The Israeli prime minister is in Portugal. An accord between Israelis and Palestinians regarding the withdrawal of troops from the Gaza Strip and Jericho could be reached in the next two weeks. This is what Yitzhaq Rabin said today at a news conference:

[Begin Rabin recording, in English with superimposed Portuguese translation] It will be done in a few weeks,

more than two weeks. And I don't believe that it is advisable to be discussing a specific timetable at the moment. I can assure you it will be less than three months as originally planned. The real problem now is not how quickly the accord will be implemented once it is reached, but how we reach it. I am very sorry to have to say this, but it will take longer than two weeks. [end recording]

[Announcer] That was the Israeli prime minister, translated by Miguel Moreira. Prime Minister Cavaco Silva was also at the news conference. He said that Portugal supports an agreement between the EC and Israel as long as mutual interests are safeguarded.

Overall Settlement 'Possible' in 1994

LD2302224294 Lisbon RDP Antena 1 Radio Network in Portuguese 2200 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Israel thinks it possible for a comprehensive agreement to be signed with the Arab states by the end of the year: This was stated this evening by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin at a dinner with [Portuguese Prime Minister] Cavaco Silva and other members of the government, during which Rabin offered to extend the hand of peace.

[Begin recording of Rabin, in English] As for our other negotiating partners, my message is this: I am extending my hand to you as a sign of peace. We feel no hatred, no grudge or bigotry. Let us all make a pledge that we will do our utmost to achieve peace during this coming year so as to usher in a new era in a new Middle East, an era in which the integrity, the security and the sovereignty of all nations, all states, are respected in that Middle East of our wishes, where cooperation with dignity will prevail. [end recording]

A statement to go down in history, marking the high point of this first day of the Israeli Prime Minister's visit to Portugal.

Peres Interviewed on Cairo Agreement, Talks

TA1902120094 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 11 Feb 94 pp 2, 3

["Exclusive" interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Smadar Peri in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] [Peri] Mr. Peres, how do you feel after signing the agreement?

[Peres] We carried out a difficult task. We had two main difficulties: one, the matter itself; two, getting to know the partner. Unfortunately, or rather fortunately, I reached the conclusion that my partner is not what I thought he would be—for better or for worse. He is absolutely different. At the same time, I found that the matters under discussion are much more difficult than we first estimated.

Considering that we reached an agreement without the pressure of war or acts of terror, I believe this is a fine achievement. I am very sober, and I believe we have been negotiating with ourselves. The Palestinians do not really have much to give us. We, on the other hand, can free ourselves of the need to rule another nation, police its life. There is no point to negotiate otherwise.

This was not a give-and-take negotiating process. It was more a process of "liberate yourself, and gain your truth."

[Peri] Who exactly signed the agreement for the other side? Do you believe the PLO indeed represents the Palestinians today?

[Peres] This is a good question. I would like to say something from my political experience. Sometimes I ask myself what is a leader. Some say a leader should be strong or talented. I believe a leader should have one talent: to represent his people.

I believe that to a large extent Yasir 'Arafat does represent the condition of the Palestinian people. I accept him as one, and I believe that, from his point of view, he is very devoted to his role. The negotiations, therefore, were held with the Palestinian people and its representatives.

[Peri] What did you learn about 'Arafat and his associates during the negotiations?

[Peres] Primarily, I learned how difficult it is for them to reach decisions. The image that we have that everything is organized, that clear cut decisions....

[Peri] For example?

[Peres] On almost every issue. I saw their hesitations, I saw that I was sitting with undecided people. That is, there is a great difference between their rhetoric and reality. The rhetoric is unequivocal, while making a decision is a very complex process, which for them is not at all simple.

It was very hard on them. They hold diversified views. Even 'Arafat had a hard time. In addition, they are really suspicious and fearful.

[Peri] Do they suspect us or themselves?

[Peres] They suspect us, and they fear their people reactions.

[Peri] Who matters most to 'Arafat—those who surround him or the residents of the territories?

[Peres] What matters to him most are his own views and hunches. He has to ask himself first of all what the residents of the territories will accept and what they will reject. And the answer is not simple. I have noticed that he usually listens to what others are saying, and he hesitates a lot when making decisions. That is contrary to all I have ever believed.

[Peri] Those who followed the negotiations could not fail to notice that people crop up next to 'Arafat, and then they disappear. We started the negotiations with Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], and yet he was absent at the signing ceremony this week.

[Peres] There is not a state organization. It is a political organization, a coalition founded on accords and discords, unlike us, with people being elected to the Knesset and the government in an orderly fashion.

[Peri] Although only a short time has passed since the signing, we can guess that criticism will be leveled at 'Arafat from within the PLO.

[Peres] Criticism is always leveled after each change. People do not like changes, and this one is very significant. I think if we failed, God forbid, the disappointment in Israel, in the PLO, and the entire world would be great and total. We have in fact coped with extremely complex issues.

[Peri] How did it work? Can you describe the obstacles you had to overcome before the agreement was signed?

[Peres] I told 'Arafat in our first meeting: You tell your delegation and I will tell ours to conduct genuine negotiations. When they feel they are drawing closer to each other, they do not have to go back to us. When they feel they are drawing apart, they should avoid reaching an unbridgeable point. It is better for them to summon us before they become too entrenched in their stands.

[Peri] How many times were you summoned in the course of the negotiations?

[Peres] A great many times. The delegates wanted to consult all the time, but I also had to be in touch with home, with the prime minister, on the most vital issues. Then the Egyptians approached me and then the Palestinians. I only intervened in cases which I feared would become insurmountable obstacles.

I think it is the right time to say a word about our team: We would not have reached an agreement without them. They did an excellent job, they worked together as a team.

[Peri] What was the toughest moment in these negotiations?

[Peres] Almost everything was tough. There were a few times when various issues were raised during one single day, and almost each one of these issues was dynamite. The last issue—border crossing control—was the toughest. This issue was formulated in two drafts—an Israeli and a Palestinian—and people who read both might have thought there was no way they could be bridged. And yet we did it.

[Peri] You have said that in this matter we achieved more than we had hoped.

[Peres] We achieved an unequivocal Palestinian acceptance of our full responsibility—security and administration—for the crossings. This issue was ambiguous for a long period.

[Peri] Did the difficulty lie in the Palestinian adherence to symbols expressing their yearning for a state?

[Peres] The Palestinians were unable to distinguish red lines from imaginary lines. One of our difficulties stemmed from the fact that many unauthorized Israelis gave the Palestinians all kinds of messages that should have never been delivered.

[Peri] Such as?

[Peres] Such as that Israel would give them 140 square kilometers (instead of 54). They made an invalid promise.

[Peri] Who are these Israelis?

[Peres] I do not want to mention names. These are unauthorized Israelis who traveled to Tunis and made pilgrimages to 'Arafat. Who authorized them? I must say, there is a lot of unwarranted talk in Israel.

[Peri] What else did they promise 'Arafat?

[Peres] Almost everything. They let the Palestinians understand that if they as much as asked or demanded, they would get it. I am not acquainted with all of them. I got feedbacks from the Palestinians. They presented demands based on the "pledges" they had received.

[Peri] And what was your reply in these cases?

[Peres] I told the truth. I said these people had no authority.

[Peri] Who exactly is our Palestinian partner?

[Peres] At one point 'Arafat told me: Do you want to turn me into the head of a small village or al-Nabi Musa's shaykh? I told him: Don't forget that when Israel was established in 1948 only 650,000 lived there. Today you are the leader of almost one million Palestinians.

Our main partner is the one million Palestinians living in Gaza and the Jericho area.

[Peri] What do you think about the fact that not all members of 'Arafat's entourage plan to reside in the territories?

[Peres] I don't want to deal with the personal aspect. I think they still do not fully comprehend what has really happened here. Life in exile, generally speaking, has many elements of make-believe: It is life in a realm of uniforms, symbols, words, and declarations. There is no government, no state, no budget.

[Peri] 'Arafat seems to be a man of symbols, words, and declarations.

[Peres] He is a survivor. It is an undeniable fact that so far he has remained the man who represents the Palestinians more than any other. To date there is nobody as acceptable to them as 'Arafat.

I did not encounter any problems in negotiating with him. Contrary to all the rumors, I did not find him to be edgy, but he is very tense. I have to admit, however, that I found him different from what I thought. At the same time it has to be noted that I met him only on certain occasions, during negotiations, when he has to consider everything carefully and evince great responsibility. I even felt that he was somewhat concerned lest he fails to grasp the full meaning of the issues under discussion. Altogether I did not find it difficult to conduct negotiations with him.

[Peri] How did you find him different?

[Peres] On the basis of newspaper reports I thought he is a man who loses his patience and who jumps to conclusions very quickly.

[Peri] The most important question is what will happen if it transpires that 'Arafat does not want to or cannot honor the agreement?

[Peres] The answer is simple: The Israeli public must decide what kind of relations it wants to have with the Palestinians, and whether the Palestinians want peace as much as we do. I believe most of them do. They are tired of war and terrorism.

I believe the Palestinian people have the same biological dynamics as all people: They see a world abounding with opportunities for the younger generation.

This week I visited the Cairo book fair. It was interesting to discover what people read there: scientific and non-fiction books. A new, modern era has opened and everybody is trying to adjust to it.

[Peri] What did we achieve in this agreement?

[Peres] We overcame many difficult problems without compromising our security, because we made no compromises on security issues. What we accomplished there can be summed up in one expression: Anti-Bosnia.

[Peri] In his speech after the signing ceremony 'Arafat emphasized the economic issue. He is concerned about this.

[Peres] I am happy about this, because this is the issue about which I spoke with 'Arafat more than anything else. I told him the test in the territories will mainly be at the personal-economic level. People in the territories want to know whether they will finally be able to bring home more than \$1,000 a year. This is the ultimate test. I think that a happy neighbor is a good neighbor, whereas a dejected neighbor is a bad neighbor.

[Peri] What will happen if their economic expectations are not met?

[Peres] I don't see any reason why it shouldn't succeed. We too have to help, and there is also a lot of international goodwill in this issue. Besides, judging by the critics of the agreement you would think our present situation in Gaza is excellent. We must remember that our starting point is not all that good. We will always be able to preserve what we have now.

[Peri] Could you dispel the fog surrounding the negotiations? Who actually led them on their side?

[Peres] 'Arafat, no doubt about it. He listened, he was not always knowledgeable about the issue at hand, but he was the leader. No decision was made without him, and he occasionally caused problems.

The man is a symbol. He is not coming to the territories with psychological baggage. He kept the Palestinian cause in the international and Arab public eye for 25 years.

[Peri] And this agreement places him on the way to a Palestinian state.

[Peres] They want a Palestinian state, but there is no mention of it in the agreement. In the official meeting between myself and 'Arafat in Davos, in the presence of our delegation, he said: You think I do not know the difference between autonomy and a state, but I would like to tell you that I do. I realize we are not talking about a state, and we would rather have a confederation with Jordan.

This statement is also binding on Hawatimah and Jibril. I do not think 'Arafat was saying that in confidence. He did not need to convince my five aides.

[Peri] Is the fact that there is no Palestinian state on the way supposed to appease us?

[Peres] No, such a possibility has not been eliminated. Moreover, there is no such thing as appeasing situations. Life is dynamic, and whatever is said today could change tomorrow.

[Peri] What will happen on 13 April?

[Peres] According to the agreement, we must effect the withdrawal four months after the signing of the agreement. We are not committed to 13 April. At the same time, I believe we will all make a genuine effort to meet the tight schedule. Our people, too, want to be sure we made a feasible agreement.

[Peri] How did you communicate with the prime minister during the negotiations?

[Peres] We coordinated our positions and held consultations throughout. Our consultations were matter-of-fact. The fact is that he ultimately approved the agreement.

[Peri] It has been three nights you have not slept because of the negotiations. You have actually been doing the dirty work.

[Peres] That does not matter to me. If the life of one child is spared as a result of my work, it is all worth to me. I know exactly what my position is. Nobody can take away from me what I have done in my life, neither the mistakes nor the successes. Nobody can add to or detract from them. I know exactly where I stand.

[Peri] You did hard and ungrateful work to achieve this agreement.

[Peres] I do not think important achievements can be attained without hard work. There are no miracles.

[Peri] What sort of nation will we be after the agreement?

[Peres] We will be free of something we could not continue to endure: ruling over another nation in a very narrow strip of land currently inhabited by over 4 million Jews and 3 million non-Jews. Such a situation can easily turn into a tragedy if there are no statesmen who can exactly envision the dangers and risks.

Besides, I truly believe we are en route to the 21st century, in which the sources of power and wealth will not be measured in material dimensions but in spiritual and intellectual ones.

[Peri] Could you describe for us a specific moment symbolizing the entire negotiating process?

[Peres] We were arguing about the criteria to be applied in the border crossings, whether a man who was a terrorist would be allowed in. 'Arafat said: If that is the case, I will not be allowed to cross. I told him: Do not brag. You used to be a terrorist. Today you are an ex-terrorist.

At first he was taken aback, but then he realized what I meant. I told him: We are not the only ones who changed their attitude toward you. You also changed.

Peres Addresses Committee on Impact of Arab Boycott

TA2102112894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has said that five Arab countries are currently working to cancel the Arab boycott against Israel. These countries are Egypt, Tunisia, Oman, Qatar, and Morocco. Peres stressed that the Arab boycott is as much a problem for the Arab world as it is for Israel.

Speaking before the Knesset Economic Affairs Committee, which discussed the effects of the Arab boycott on Israel, the foreign minister added that in its war against the Arab boycott, Israel is not seeking to take over the Arab world. Through the peace process, Israel is trying to bring about an economization of politics instead of a politicization of economics. This was reported by our correspondent Eytan Almog.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1105 GMT on 21 February adds that Foreign Minister Peres also said that

"the economic aid Israel receives from the United States compensates for the losses incurred as a result of the Arab boycott.""]

Intelligence Officers on Arab's Economic Situation
TA2102171894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300
GMT 21 Feb 94

[Text] IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch officers today told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that the Arab countries are facing serious economic difficulties. This state of affairs is taking its affecting both the military procurement and the civilian population's living condition.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the officers also briefed the Knesset members of an improvement in Syria's economic situation following a rise in the production of oil. The intelligence officers also believe that the economic aspect will play an important role in the Palestinian ability to set up a self-government.

Baraq: IDF Capable of 'Speedy Withdrawal'
TA2202150094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200
GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Chief of Staff Ehud Barak said that once the agreements with the PLO are concluded, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will be capable of completing a speedy withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho without holding up the implementation of the agreements.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that Lieutenant General Barak told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that if the wave of terrorist attacks continued, the defense establishment would be forced to consider closing the territories.

Our correspondent notes that several Knesset members expressed concern over possible future developments in the Gaza Strip after the IDF's withdrawal.

Delegation To Head to Syria Via Cairo 27 Feb
TA2402063494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500
GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] The Israeli Arab delegation headed by Knesset Member [MK] 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah will be allowed to set out for Syria next Sunday [27 February] morning via Cairo to deliver its condolences to President Hafiz al-Asad over the death of his son. Egyptian Ambassador Muhammad Basyuni informed MK Darawshah last night. He also told him that President al-Asad and the Syrian Government welcome the arrival of the Israeli Arab delegation. Our correspondent Qaysar Kabha reports that the delegation will consist of 50 members, including MK's Darawshah and Talib al-Sani'. The Egyptian Government will issue each delegate a one-time laissez-passer to enter Syria.

Al-Asad Urged To Do More Than Invite Delegation

TA2202181194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Feb 94 p B1

[Commentary by Yo'el Marcus: "No Big Deal"]

[Text] Knesset Member 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah is obviously not going to Damascus to express his condolences to President al-Asad. They are not friends, and condolences can be sent in a telegram that will travel the same indirect way he and his friends were to travel to Damascus—through a third country and bearing no Israeli markings. The Solan Communications Company would gladly do this service for him, even for free.

In his trip, Darawshah wished to make a political move that would seem like a Syrian gesture toward Israel. I am afraid, however, that his trick will yield just the opposite result. The main Syrian condition was that the delegation be made of strictly "our Arab brothers." In other words, al-Asad wants a Jew-free delegation. In doing so, he made the same mistake he made in Geneva when he prevented the participation of Israeli reporters in his joint news conference with President Clinton. We said then and we say today: This is no way to win the Israelis' hearts.

The wise guys will ask: Did you ask to travel to Damascus to express condolences? Well, the answer is no. Nevertheless, over the past weeks and months, some of the most prominent Israeli reporters have asked to be received by him. I told Darawshah last week that I am willing to convert to Islam if only he promised to take me with him. "Next time perhaps," he said with a smile.

This, however, is not the point. The point is that not only journalists, but also the president of Israel, and mainly the prime minister and seniors on his behalf have repeatedly asked through every possible channel to meet with al-Asad or his trustee to discuss ways to secure peace at the highest possible levels. Al-Asad has refused and is refusing even now, after the summit with Clinton. He simply does not want, or is unable, to make himself stand face to face with Israeli Jews; not even to receive the Golan Heights back.

He missed opportunities before Geneva; he missed one in Geneva; and he is doing it again now. He invited the delegation of Israeli Arabs at a very late date (the 40 days of mourning are nearly over), under humiliating traveling conditions, without Israeli passports, not through the al-Qunaytirah but via a third country, and under a series of restrictions on the issues they may and may not discuss with him. Even the American anti-Semitic clubs have at least one token Jew, for appearance sakes. Darawshah's delegation will not even include a symbolic Jew.

The problem has always been, and still is, al-Asad's lack of understanding for the Israeli mentality and psychology. Now, when we are conducting peace negotiations and there is a little opening of goodwill for concessions on Israel's part, childish excuses to talk to al-Asad are not required. In fact, he has a standing offer to meet Rabin or a senior envoy on his behalf and close a deal on the principles of the nature of the agreement they will sign. Al-Asad does not have too much time, and he is not as sophisticated as is often believed. If he does not hurry up, the status quo will continue and many, perhaps even Rabin, will sigh with relief. Instead of using this shortcut, al-Asad is wasting valuable time instructing his envoy in Washington not to discuss security arrangements or the nature of peace, only withdrawal: Pull out first, then we will talk of peace and security arrangements.

This waste of time is particularly intolerable now, when terror against Israelis is becoming more brutal every day. The more appalling killings are committed and the more funerals take place, the less the public will support making concessions in return for peace. We might reach a point at which the Israelis will ask themselves: If terror continues despite our willingness to give up the territories, why not keep them?

The security arrangements and/or personal security are the magic keys for peace. In this fragile time it is particularly important to repel the skepticism that has started crawling into our hearts. The ping pong games that led to the breakthrough in U.S.-PRC relations do not suit the Middle East pace. It is important that a central figure such as al-Asad use big words in talking to us. He should flood us with words of peace and with gestures. After all, it serves him as well—we have the goods. It is with us, Jews, that he has to make peace, not with the Arabs. Darawshah's delegation will make no difference, or as Rabin reportedly said: No big deal.

Police Minister: No Special Status for Orient House

TA2002192794 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 20 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Tomorrow the Knesset Internal Affairs Committee will discuss the status of Orient House, the PLO's headquarters in East Jerusalem. The discussion will be held in the wake of a report aired here yesterday, in which the Jerusalem Police chief admitted that the building is outside the police responsibility. Internal Affairs Committee Chairman Yehoshu'a Matza has invited the police minister to tour the building. Our police correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports:

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] A senior Orient House element today told us off the record that in recent secret contacts with Israeli officials, a clear understanding was achieved under which the building was granted an unofficial status of an embassy or a consulate. He confirmed that the security personnel had been ordered to ban Israeli policemen from the building. [end recording]

Police Minister Moshe Shahal said in reaction that Orient House has no special status, and that the police behave toward it as they do any other building.

Police Warns of Increased Danger of Car Bombs

TA2302082194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] The head of the Police Department's Operation Division, Commander Arye 'Amit, says the danger of terrorist car bombs in Israel has increased. Speaking to Qol Yisra'el's police reporter, 'Amit said suicide terrorists have been receiving special training, especially in Lebanon, on how to prepare a car bomb, penetrate into Israel, and set it off. Last year there was a marked increase in such attempts.

Arab Likud Members Deny Seeking 'Arafat Meeting

TA2402102294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] Arab and Druze Likud activists have denied that they asked 'Arafat's aide Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi to arrange a visit in Tunis. They were reacting to Dr. al-Tibi's remarks that a delegation of Israeli Arab Likud supporters is not welcome in Tunis, and that 'Arafat is not interested in meeting them. Ayub Qara', a member of the Likud's secretariat, told our correspondent Yo'el Dar that it was Dr. al-Tibi who approached the Druze activists and asked them to hand him names of Likud supporters in key positions who would be willing to travel to Tunis and help promote the peace process. Qara' said that Arab members of the Likud Central Committee want to be a bridge to peace and contribute to the ongoing process.

Fugitive Caught in Gaza; Other Incidents Reported

TA2302184094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] A Border Police undercover unit this evening captured an Islamic Jihad fugitive in Gaza city. The man was captured when he refused soldiers' orders to stop and tried to run over one of the soldiers with his car.

In Rafah, a Palestinian was shot by troops and moderately wounded. He was part of a group that ran away after refusing soldiers' orders to stop.

A Border Police unit in Bethlehem this afternoon discovered a bomb in Manger Square. The device was safely defused by a Border Police sapper.

A Tel Aviv Magistrates Court has extended the remand in custody by a week of a Ramla resident suspected of handing over an Uzi submachine gun to a resident of Rafah. The accused, who was also suspected of hiding other weapons near his home, denies the allegations.

A police officer has been shot near Dimona. He is now hospitalized at Soroka Hospital in Beersheba. His condition is described as light to moderate. The officer told investigators that while he was waiting at a bus stop, a car stopped alongside him and three Palestinians attempted to force him into the vehicle. He succeeded in fighting them off, but a third man shot him in the leg. Security forces are investigating.

King To Visit Saudi Arabia in Early Mar

JN2302120294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Jordanian sources today said that King Husayn will visit Saudi Arabia at the beginning of next month to meet with Saudi King Fahd. This will be the king's first visit to Saudi Arabia since the eruption of the Gulf crisis.

Egyptian Minister Arrives for Trade Talks

Details Purpose of Visit

JN2202215894 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Excerpt] Mahmud Muhammad, Egyptian minister of economy and foreign trade, arrived in Amman today on a visit aimed at reinforcing trade relations between the two fraternal countries.

The visit by Mahmud Muhammad, Egyptian minister of economy and foreign trade, is meant to reinforce trade and economic relations between Jordan and Egypt and to increase commercial exchanges between the two fraternal countries.

[Begin Muhammad recording] We are here to sign, God willing, a protocol after an agreement has been reached on the list of Egyptian and Jordanian commodities. As I told you, the aim is to reinforce and give momentum to commercial exchanges between our two countries.

I also want to take this opportunity to say that, God willing, I will have the honor of meeting with some officials in this fraternal country to exchange views with them, benefit from their experience, and inform them of our views on the Egyptian experiment.

As you know, Egypt went through very successful stages of economic transition and reform. It became a model for economic reform. We hope that this operation will serve the Egyptian people and upgrade the level of economic performance in Egypt. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Confers With al-Majali

JN2302112694 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali received in his office at the Prime Ministry this morning Mahmud Muhammad Mahmud, Egyptian minister of economy and foreign trade. Dr. Rima Khalaf, Jordanian minister of industry and trade, and the Egyptian ambassador in Amman attended the meeting. Talks dealt with ways to boost and upgrade cooperation between the two sisterly countries in the commercial and economic fields.

Mahmud told reporters he conveyed to the prime minister Egyptian Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi's greetings, adding that the meeting was extremely cordial and fruitful. He said talks dealt with bilateral trade relations

in particular and Egyptian-Jordanian ties in general. He added they discussed ways to bolster trade exchange and enhance the march of rapprochement between the two fraternal peoples—a march that needs no confirmation. He said it was agreed to hold the higher joint committee meetings immediately after 'Id al-Fitr when an Egyptian delegation led by 'Atif Sidqi will arrive in Jordan to take part in these talks, which will cover all areas of bilateral relations.

Signs Economic Protocol

JN2302134994 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Egypt and Jordan signed an economic protocol at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce today. Minister of Industry and Commerce Dr. Rima Khalaf signed for Jordan, while the Egyptian minister of economy and foreign trade signed for Egypt.

Marwan 'Awad, secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, spoke to the radio on the provisions contained in this protocol, saying:

[Begin 'Awad recording] Today, the first protocol to emerge from the Egyptian-Jordanian trade exchange agreement was signed. This is the first protocol to be signed in the aftermath of the trade agreement signed in 1992, which replaced the old agreement signed in 1965. According to the protocol signed today, the Jordanian and Egyptian sides agreed on two lists of commodities, one concerning Egyptian commodities and another concerning Jordanian commodities. The products included in these two lists will be exempted from customs fees and additional direct fees and taxes, with the exception of domestic taxes and fees and sales tax. Moreover, the products included in these two lists will be exempted from non-customs restrictions. The protocol stipulated that except for the products included in the two lists, the trade exchange between the two countries will be subject to all customs fees and taxes and subsequent fees, regardless of the type of the trade transactions entailed. This will be in accordance with the legislations in force in both countries.

The protocol also stipulated that the Jordanian Trade Center in Egypt and the Egyptian Trade Center in Jordan will each have a share of trade exchange confined to \$7 million to be used for importing commodities from the other country. Each center will be permitted to import its quota of products in accordance with the legislations and rules in force in both countries. Payments for such transactions will be made in convertible currency. [end recording]

Minister Signs Loan Agreement With U.S. Envoy

JN2102205894 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 21 Feb 94

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[Text] Jordan and the United States today signed an agreement under which the United States will finance a Jordanian purchase of 100,000 tonnes of U.S. wheat at a cost of \$15 million. The agreement was signed by Finance Minister Sami Qammuh and U.S. Charge d'Affaires Douglas Koene.

Mr. Qammuh said the loan will carry 2 percent annual interest for the first seven years and 3 percent thereafter. He said the loan was repayable in 24 installments beginning in the seventh year. Mr. Qammuh said 60 percent of the value of the loan was a grant from the United States to shore up Jordan's budget.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said the loan was one aspect of Jordanian-U.S. cooperation.

Reasons for Maintaining Iraqi Embargo Viewed
JN2302120794 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
23 Feb 94 p 4

[Editorial: "Oil in Sanctions Wheel"]

[Text] It is common knowledge by now that whenever Iraq gets closer to meeting its obligations under the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, new conditions spring up to frustrate its bid to end the international punitive measures against it. The addition of conditions in such cases is called, generally in the West, deliberate moving of the goalposts.

We have a better term for it: international blackmail. By this we mean that there are definite economic reasons behind the constant orchestration of new conditions against that Arab country. These reasons have roots in the world oil market glut.

There are several oil producing countries which would give or do anything to keep Iraqi oil out of the international market for the simple reason that oil prices have

dropped considerably in the past few years and are hovering now about \$16 per barrel. Keeping Iraqi oil out of circulation would at least keep the already depressed prices where they are. The reintroduction of Iraqi petroleum products into the market stands to lower even further the current price ranges. The Arab oil producing countries alone saw their revenues drop from \$180 billion in the early eighties to a mere \$75 billion in 1993. And what applies to the Arab World applies also to other producers from various regions of the world. This is a colossal economic crisis, which would only be exacerbated by lifting the oil embargo on Baghdad.

The Western industrial countries, which count on the revenues of the oil producing countries to grease their economies by selling them more and more aircraft, tanks and guns, have a stake in keeping the pockets of these countries full and ready enough in order to be able to perform exactly such a task.

We would have thought there is a better way to stabilise the oil market than by continuing to punish the Iraqi people. Sooner or later, Iraqi oil will enter the market. It would be wiser and fairer if a global solution could be found for this problem based on sound economic considerations for both the exporters and importers of this basic commodity. The real issue now lies with OPEC countries themselves, which have not been able or willing to heed their own agreements. In the long run, a more equitable quota system could be applied that could satisfy the global economy in a balanced manner. Meanwhile, the persistent ostracisation of Iraq by the international community, even after it has gone more than 95 per cent of the way to meet its obligations, makes little sense besides being totally unfair and unjust. Gradual easing of the sanctions against Baghdad commensurate with the extent of its fulfilment of its international obligations must become the mainstay of the new policy towards it instead of the current arbitrary and unethical direction being followed now.

'Resistance' Reports Anti-Israeli Operations

NC1902181294 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630
GMT 19 Feb 94

[Report by 'Ali Dawud from al-Nabatiyah]

[Text] Tension and anticipation still prevail in the liberated villages in the south in the wake of continued Israeli aggression, which was renewed today against villages in the central sector. The resistance retaliated with an operation against a joint patrol along the al-Qantarah-al-Tayyibah road this afternoon.

The Israeli occupation troops bombarded the hills of Qabrikhah, Tulin, al-Tamiriyah, Shaqra, and Wadi al-Saluqi with 155-mm tank artillery and 120-mm mortars this afternoon. Citizen Hasan 'Ali 'Awali was wounded in Tulin and was taken to the Tibnin government hospital for treatment.

At 1500 today, agent Lahd [South Lebanese Army] positions in 'Alman and al-Shumariyah bombarded the area surrounding the positions with 82-mm mortar fire. This was accompanied by machine-gun fire against adjacent forests.

According to reports from the occupied border strip, the occupation troops have arrested Salim 'Awadah, member of the al-Naqurah municipal council; his sons Hasan, Ibrahim, and 'Isam; and the latter's wife and took them to the al-Khiyam prison.

The Amal Movement and the Islamic Resistance announced in a joint statement that their forces attacked a joint patrol along the al-Qantarah-al-Tayyibah road at 1345 today. The statement said a vehicle was destroyed and its crew members were killed or wounded. Lahd's radio later reported the operation but kept silent on its losses.

Army Warned Against Allowing Firing in South

NC2402114794 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic
1030 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] Citing security sources in the border zone, our military correspondent reports that the Lebanese Army has recently allowed firing in areas under its control or areas adjacent to its deployment zone. The security sources affirmed to our correspondent that any shooting directed at us will be returned, and this will expose the Lebanese Army troops to the possibility of being hit. The sources added that the Lebanese Army must take this into consideration.

Cabinet Discusses U.S. Vehicles, Fatah Group

NC2402075094 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 0530 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Security, living conditions, and the issue of displaced persons were discussed yesterday at the cabinet's regular session and during a meeting between Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and Minister Walid Junblatt. [passage omitted]

An official Lebanese source said the cabinet approved Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul's request to purchase 175 M-113 U.S. personnel carriers for 60 billion Lebanese pounds. The source added that the used vehicles will be shipped from the U.S. base in Wiesbaden, Germany.

[Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic at 0615 GMT on 24 February adds: "The cabinet was informed that a Fatah splinter group led by Munir al-Maqdah was behind the firing of a Grad rocket at Israel."]

Cabinet Discusses Reshuffle, Economy

NC2402092294 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615
GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] The cabinet yesterday discussed three issues that have not been announced. The first was the government situation and the attempt to reshuffle the cabinet portfolios based on certain plans by the president and the prime minister. These plans have clashed with calculations by the parliamentary speaker, who demanded the Finance Ministry portfolio for his sect based on the principle that any reshuffle must aim at energizing governmental work and that this can only be done by correcting the course of the state's financial policy, which has demonstrated its failure and sterility. While agreement between the president and the prime minister exists because of the indirect concurrence of interests, the sticky issue of reshuffling the portfolios persists. It affects the Ministries of Finance, Interior, Industry and Oil, and Labor. President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri raised this issue during their meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. The two returned with a firm response from the Syrian leadership that it is ready to assist Lebanon in resolving problems in government work, but that a change of government or reshuffle is an internal Lebanese matter. Lebanese political sources maintain that a government reshuffle is still possible but will not be sufficient as the entire government performance in the political, economic, and security fields is deficient.

The second issue discussed by the cabinet was the high cost of living and economic stagnation. This is occurring at a time when the dollar rate in the local market has been stable and the government claims that the development and reconstruction process is continuing. This is casting some doubt on the state's financial policy.

The third issue was the demands of the General Labor Federation. With the federation's demands, a crisis has been created for political reasons. Some ministers at yesterday's cabinet session maintained that this fabricated crisis constitutes a crime against the worker and his livelihood and is a dangerous step at this time.

Hizballah Leader Criticizes Government Policy
NC2402085994 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615
GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah has said that Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri's government was established according to the settlement plan of capitulation in the area. He noted that the government's projects are inspired by peace with Israel. He accused some state officials of seeking to cause a clash between Hizballah and the Lebanese Army over implementation of commitments, which he said the government gave to the U.S. secretary of state.

Hizballah's Qasim Denies Contacts To Stop Resistance

NC2002064894 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Feb 94

[Text] Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Na'im Qasim has denied reports that there have been contacts with Hizballah asking it to decrease its resistance operations. He asserted that no one asked them to cut down their operations during the Geneva summit. His party does not carry out resistance activities based on the negotiations, because "we do not believe in these negotiations," Shaykh Qasim said. He pointed out that resistance operations are escalated and reduced according to the objective situation on the ground, not according to political circumstances.

As for information coming from within Hizballah about preparations for a settlement, Shaykh Qasim clarified that the party opposes a settlement in the first place. He said: We are betting on its failure. We believe that there are enough complications and pressures to hamper many of the steps to a settlement. Therefore, Shaykh Qasim continued, the possibility of failure is as great as any other possibility.

Court Action Against Paper Over Israeli Proposal Halted

NC1602131294 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 16 Feb 94

[Text] Beirut's Publications Court, meeting under Judge Afif Shams-al-Din, has issued its verdict in the case of AL-SAFIR's publication in May of the text of an Israeli proposal to the bilateral negotiations with Lebanon.

The court ruled that any pursuit of Faysal Salman [the newspaper's editing director] and Ibrahim al-Amin [staff writer] be stopped for lack of incriminating evidence in accordance with Articles 12 and 25 of Law 104/77. The court referred the papers to the public prosecutor to take the necessary action. The ruling can be appealed.

The judge did not announce the ruling during the session. He asked those involved in the case to read the ruling in the court's office and a court official read it out to the press.

Authorities Approve Ukrainian Honorary Consul

NC1802185394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 18 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz received the certificate of Ukraine's honorary consulate in Lebanon from Mr. Samir Tawilah after the Lebanese authorities approved his appointment as Ukraine's honorary consul here.

Buwayz then received a delegation from the Lebanese-Ukrainian Friendship Society in the presence of Consul Tawilah. Tawilah said after the meeting that a protocol for cooperation between the Chambers of Industry and Commerce in Beirut and Ukraine was signed during his recent visit to Ukraine.

Press: Israeli Stands Threaten Peace Opportunity
JN2002084394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Feb 94

[From the press review]

[Text] Press editorials have focused on the bilateral peace talks between the heads of Arab and Israeli delegations, noting that these talks have so far not resulted in any moves that would help the peace process achieve its objectives in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy.

In an editorial under the headline the "Vicious Circle," TISHRIN says: The third week of bilateral peace talks has ended in nothing. The suspension of the talks, as requested by the Israeli side to hold consultations with its government, has resulted in nothing new to advance the peace process. Thus, the Washington talks were stalemated again, just like all rounds of talks that have been held since the Madrid conference.

TISHRIN stresses that Israel is still unwilling to establish and make peace or to respond to the requirements of a just and comprehensive peace. It is also trying to conceal its evasive policies, intransigence, and rejection of the terms of peace in an attempt to prolong the talks and undermine their objectives and tracks. Israel considers the talks an end, rather than a means to achieve a just, comprehensive peace. The paper says that in all that, Israel is pursuing the policy of Yitzhaq Shamir, who declared that the negotiations will continue for 10 years. This is in order to change the situation on the ground so that the Arabs would have nothing to demand when Israel controls all the occupied Arab territories through the settlement building. In the context of the same Israeli maneuvers, Yitzhaq Rabin made statements which do not differ in form or content from the Shamir policy. In his statements, he accused Syria of not being serious about the peace process.

TISHRIN stresses that by his statements, Rabin wants to conceal Israel's objectives and intentions which have not led to any positive move for the sake of peace. The paper adds: Because its malicious objectives and intentions have been exposed, Israel has failed to undermine the Madrid formula. Therefore, it began to cast doubts about the U.S. role and its effectiveness and to aim its poisoned arrows against the Geneva summit. This is because the meeting of Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton has proved beyond any doubt that there will be no peace in the region without Syria's leading role in the peace process and without the enforcement of the resolutions of international legitimacy.

Concluding its editorial, TISHRIN stresses that only a decision to give up Israel's usurpation and occupation of the Arab territories without any conditions as demanded by the resolutions of international legitimacy is the key and basis for the achievement of a just, comprehensive peace.

In an editorial under the headline "The Deception," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: It is not enough for Shim'on Peres to hint at the possibility of evacuating a settlement or two and then to claim that Israel is working for peace and that it wants to provide the appropriate atmosphere for continuing the negotiating process. Nor can he convince anybody that the Rabin government has abandoned expansion and settlement schemes and that it is now ready to accept the UN Security Council resolutions which consider the settlements illegitimate, a violation of international law and conventions, and demand their immediate removal. Casting doubts about the Israeli position, the paper says: Had Israel been truly seeking to prove its peace intentions and to push the peace process in the right direction, it would have reconsidered its entire settlement plans, rather than to evacuate some settlements.

The paper stresses that Israel should explicitly and clearly declare full commitment to the principles, resolutions, and trend of the international legitimacy. It should also accept the principle of full withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories. It should also halt the policy of military escalation in southern Lebanon and its arbitrary and terrorist measures inside the occupied territories. The paper adds: Only such moves will convince the Arabs and international community of Israel's seriousness about working for a just, comprehensive solution in the Middle East. The paper cautions that the available peace opportunity is now being threatened by the intransigent Israeli stands. Unless there is a fundamental change in these stands and unless Israel stops methods of maneuvers and deception, the opportunity will be lost, together with many hopes for arriving at the aspired solution.

Concluding, the paper says: The Arabs have offered all they can to maintain this opportunity, and it remains for Israel to show enough courage to show interest in not wasting it. This can only be achieved when it clearly and explicitly announces its acceptance of the conditions of peace, primarily withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories.

Coordination With Lebanon 'Best Reply' to Israel
JN2102082094 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 21 Feb 94

[From the Press review]

[Text] Writing about the Syrian-Lebanese summit and the unified position of the two countries, TISHRIN says: Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Hiyas al-Hirawi have held talks on enhancing fraternal bilateral ties, the peace process, and the continuous Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon.

TISHRIN notes the continuing Syrian-Lebanese coordination on all hot issues, primarily on the peace process and Israel's attempts to escape its obligations, especially withdrawal from the Golan and southern Lebanon.

The paper further highlights Israel's attempts to disturb the distinguished Syrian-Lebanese relationship and drive Lebanon to unilaterally conclude a suspect settlement. Israel is doing this through making threats and carrying out attacks. Israel's efforts are in vain because the Syrian-Lebanese relationship has reached a historic state of cohesion between the two fraternal countries. The two countries have faced Israel's prevarications and exposed maneuvers with a unified position, whether at the Washington talks or directly on the ground. Despite all the damage it has done to southern Lebanon, Israel could not make Lebanon drop its demand for the entire south or stop its coordination with Syria. The two countries share the same destiny and security and harm done to one of them harms the other.

TISHRIN goes on: Experience has shown that the strength of Lebanon and Syria lies in their unified position. Israel is trying to disengage the two countries and drag them one after the other to conclude unilateral, unfair agreements according to which part of the territory would be lost. Despite the fact that Syria and Lebanon have shown willingness to establish a just, comprehensive, and firm peace in the region, Israel has to date not pledged, even for once, to withdraw from the Golan and southern Lebanon. In fact, it is asking Lebanon to conclude a treaty in advance and to make security arrangements. It is giving hints to Syria about a partial withdrawal on the Golan and that it will conduct a referendum on its fate. If anything, this position proves that Israel is taking lightly the peace process, the U.S. initiative, Security Council resolutions, and the Geneva charters.

Syrian-Lebanese coordination is the best reply to such outright Israeli intransigence and schemes to undermine Lebanon's sovereignty over its territory and Syria's sovereignty over the Golan. Syria has proven over the years its willingness, in word and deed, to help Lebanon and share its bread and butter with it.

Concluding, TISHRIN asserts that Syria will remain by Lebanon's side. If there are people in Israel who are wagering on a Syrian-Lebanese disengagement, they are certainly entertaining illusions. The Syrian-Lebanese relationship is expected to grow and develop further.

Coordination will continue in the mutual interest of the two countries and for the good of the Arab nation.

AL-BA'TH also comments on the importance of cooperation and coordination between Syria and Lebanon, as well as the peace process and Israel's hard-line approach toward any progress in this process.

The Syrian-Lebanese summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Assad and Ilyas al-Hirawi reasserts the commitment of the two fraternal countries to a just and comprehensive peace, without any relinquishment or concession. The two countries also reject all Israeli maneuvers and plots aimed at taking on the Arabs one at a time and imposing its distorted, incomplete peace.

AL-BA'TH says the above principles also consolidate Syrian-Lebanese ties, based on cooperation and coordination in all fields. These ties are an example of what brotherly relations should be like, to serve the one people in the two countries and the higher Arab interests. As for the hard-line Israeli positions on the peace process, the paper says these stands do not leave any room for optimism—in the short and long run—about prospects for progress in the peace process. Israel is still placing more and more hurdles to the bilateral talks in Washington by totally refusing to commit itself to the major principles on which the peace process was launched, primarily Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, and the land-for-peace principle.

The paper asserts that Israel has greatly benefited from the serious achievement it has made on the Arab level by signing the Gaza-Jericho accord with the PLO—an agreement which Israel wants as a model for other agreements it wants to conclude with the rest of the Arab states involved in the peace process.

AL-BA'TH concludes: In light of the above, the Arabs had to embark on vital, concrete activity to straighten things out. In this context came the historic Geneva summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Assad and Bill Clinton. The summit has succeeded, by all standards, in stressing the major foundations of peace and crystallizing a general international approach that is committed to a just and comprehensive peace that liberates all of the occupied Arab territories and restores all usurped rights.

Afghanistan

Pakistani Foreign Minister Arrives in Kabul

LD2302182694 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Esteemed Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, the Pakistani minister of foreign affairs, arrived this afternoon in Kabul. According to a report by BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY, the esteemed Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan met Ustad Abdul Ali Mazari, General Secretary of Hezb-e Wahdat-e Islami-ye [Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan], at 1700, and held talks on issues of interest. The esteemed minister of foreign affairs of Pakistan, later, took part in an eftar [evening break fast] function launched in his honor by esteemed Abdorrah Rasul Sayyaf, Amir of Ettehad-e Islami [Islamic Union of Afghanistan], and later formal talks were held between Foreign Minister of Pakistan and Sayyaf.

Meets President Rabbani

BK2302155794 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, who arrived in Kabul today, had detailed talks with Afghan President Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani on the situation in Afghanistan. Afghan sources told Radio Pakistan's Peshawar representative that they held talks on the ways to establish permanent peace and stability in Kabul. The two leaders also held talks on fresh prospects of permanent cease-fire in Kabul to pave the way for peace talks. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali gave the assurance that Pakistan will continue to help Afghanistan on humanitarian grounds.

Protesters Attack Pakistani Embassy, Personnel

BK2302144194 Hong Kong AFP in English 1414 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Kabul, Feb 23 (AFP)—A mob of Afghan demonstrators attacked the embassy of Pakistan here late Wednesday, badly beat several Pakistani employees, smashed windows and furniture and burned the Pakistani flag in the street.

Security forces were slow in responding to what started as a peaceful march to the downtown embassy, where demonstrators wanted to protest the killing of three of their countrymen at the Afghan embassy in Islamabad.

Two badly beaten and bleeding Pakistani staffers narrowly escaped a lynching when they were dragged outside by the enraged crowd. Another beaten man and two physically unhurt but severely shocked staffers were escorted out of the building after the arrival of security forces.

On arrival the demonstrators, after yelling insults at the embassy, quickly became emboldened and began

throwing rocks at windows, then wrenched the brass name-plaque from the embassy wall and smashed it.

Soon after a wild stream of Afghans began climbing the sandbags lining the embassy walls for protection against incoming artillery, and began sacking the premises.

"The Pakistanis disgraced our embassy in Islamabad. This is our response," one demonstrator told AFP.

"We are determined to have our revenge for our three killed countrymen," another of the furious demonstrators added.

Three Afghan gunmen, who held children hostage in the Afghan embassy in Islamabad, were killed Monday when Pakistani commandos assaulted the diplomatic compound.

Update on Kabul Clashes, Cease-Fire Prospects

LD2202194694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1830 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Despite a reduction in the intensity of fighting between forces loyal to the Afghan president and prime minister in Kabul, exchanges of fire were witnessed at points of contact between these forces during the last 24 hours.

According to the report of the central news unit from Kabul, the forces opposed to the president claimed today that they had dispatched hundreds of fresh forces to the battle fronts in the south of Kabul. Meanwhile, on the eighth week after the start of the clashes, the forces loyal to the president still control all the major government centers in the capital and have prevented the penetration of their opponents to the central parts of Kabul.

On the other hand, on the eve of the arrival of Pakistan's foreign minister in Kabul, Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Islami has expressed its readiness to declare another temporary cease-fire.

According to the reports from the north of Afghanistan, the central parts of Konar province have been the scenes of intense fighting between the forces loyal to the president and the forces of General Dostum. Konar Province, which is under the control of the forces loyal to the president, enjoys an important strategic position in the north of Afghanistan, near Tajikistan.

On the other hand, the central council of Hezb-e Wahdat-e Islami [Islamic Unity Party], in a session convened recently in order to investigate the political and military developments in Afghanistan, once again declared its neutrality in the current war in that country.

India

Editorial Criticizes U.S. Policy Toward Pakistan

BK2302151194 Calcutta ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA in Bengali 12 Feb 94 p 4

[Editorial: "Are India and Pakistan on the Same Plane?"]

[Text] Robin Raphel, the U.S. assistant secretary of state, was rebuked by a number of prominent senators when she explained the Clinton administration's South Asia policy to a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee. Republican Senator Hank Brown asked: What kind of policy disappoints all the parties and makes everyone America's enemy? He did not stop there. Moving a little further, he reminded the assistant secretary of the old saying that sometimes, depending on the situation, it is better to keep quiet.

Valuable advice indeed, although it is easy to see that it is just as difficult for a member of Congress to heed this advice as it is for a government spokesman. Even the head of the administration that Robin Raphel represents does not think it is necessary to be cautious. He freely expresses whatever comes into his mind, sometimes even in writing. Given this situation, why should a bureaucrat like Mrs. Raphel restrain herself when making statements? Mr. Brown's advice to Mrs. Raphel to bridle her statements came in the context of her 26 October remarks on Kashmir. Undoubtedly, it was not a casual statement. Rather, subsequent government statements and behavior have made it clear that the new U.S. Administration wants to pursue a tougher policy toward India. It was because of his weakness for India that Daniel Patrick Moynihan, despite being a Democrat, opted to criticize Mrs. Raphel and the present Democratic administration. Moynihan's upcoming visit to India is said to be of special significance to both Washington and New Delhi. This is natural, but the question is whether former Ambassador Moynihan can assure India during his visit that the United States will stop playing the game of persistently harassing India.

There is no question that the Bush administration's stand—that a solution to the Kashmir problem should be found under the Simla Agreement; that is, through bilateral negotiations between India and Pakistan—has been abandoned. The impression is taking hold that Washington wants to place greater importance on the fictitious or exaggerated stories of human rights violations by Indian troops in Kashmir, while ignoring Pakistani support for terrorism and playing down the grisly acts being committed by terrorists throughout the Kashmir Valley.

It may be of no interest in Washington whether or not New Delhi likes the declaration that the United States wants to view India and Pakistan from the same perspective on issue of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. It is natural not to consider external opinions when formulating a country's policy. One should wonder, however, if

India is perturbed by the excessive interest being shown by the present U.S. Administration in releasing Islamabad from the purview of the Pressler Amendment. The U.S. Administration's attempts to do away with the Pressler Amendment have been temporarily abandoned. It is no secret, however, that this was not for lack of trying. The move was shelved after the extent of Congressional opposition became clear. Political experts do not hesitate to make substantial sacrifices whenever they face danger, although they are never sincere in making such sacrifices. It is difficult to say what objective will be achieved by placing India and Pakistan on the same level. This is better known by Robin Raphel, Lynne Davis, and others. The U.S. Administration's eagerness to abrogate the Pressler Amendment, though, makes us fear that the pro-Pakistan advisers scattered throughout the U.S. Administration are trying to find ways to satisfy Pakistan's appetite for arms. Perhaps this fear is unfounded, or perhaps the U.S. Administration has realized its folly; how the whole region was disrupted in the past when Pakistan was armed against the invasion of communism. But is South Asia that lucky? The person who has the experience of past suffering will naturally be alarmed by the slightest indication of danger.

Article Views Regional Nuclear Issue, U.S. Policy

BK2402031894 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 16 Feb 94 p 8

[Article by Akhtar Majeed, director of the Centre for Strategic Studies at Aligarh: "A Nuclear Brahmacharya"]

[Text] The joint US-Russian declaration on nuclear issues, signed last month in Moscow, is the continuation of the old Western policy advocating the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in the present form. The US and Russia have called upon India and Pakistan to join a multilateral forum for arms control.

It was obvious at the time of the signing of the NPT that the spread of nuclear weapons would ultimately facilitate it for the sponsors to claim a tremendous success and advocate its extension. Flaws were pointed out by India then. It is a proof of the abject failure of the conduct of Indian diplomacy that while almost all the Indian proposals for nuclear disarmament have been subsequently accepted by the world community, the latter has now pleaded with India to accept those proposals! In South Asia, there is a situation of nuclear asymmetry, with an advanced nuclear capable China on one side and acquisition of nuclear weapon capability by Pakistan, on the other. This asymmetry is not conducive to regional stability. If strategic deterrence is to be achieved, in view of the on-going missile proliferation around India, then again, acquisition of nuclear weapon capability seems the only viable option. There is an essential universality of nuclear deterrence logic and it is as true for India and Pakistan as it was for the USA and USSR. If nuclear deterrence sustained peace in the developed world, even

during the Cold War, it would sustain peace and stability in South Asia after the Cold War. The objective of the nuclear policy followed by India and Pakistan is to make certain that there is no direct nuclear threat without them being able to retaliate. During the Cold War, each had the strategic support of a superpower. Now in the absence of earlier assurances there is a need that can only be fulfilled by an overt nuclear stability in the region. Since wars in South Asia have mostly been caused by misconceptions about relative strength, there would be greater stability once such misconceptions are removed, generating the logic of deterrence peculiar to nuclear weapons.

It should be obvious to the Government of India that if it did not change its policy of nuclear abstinence, it would face a highly inimical asymmetrical predicament vis-a-vis Pakistan. In fact, our nuclear disarmament effort is a convenient and self-defeating myth. The continued nuclear brahmacharya [celibacy] of India is bound to force the rest of South Asia, China and the USA to re-evaluate their attitude towards India, and that re-evaluation would not be in our favour. If calculated meaningful ambiguity is taken for bluff then the force of deterrence is lost. The tact that the ambiguity was an emasculated one was evident from the lack of any sufficient technology effort to use any mythical "bombs in the basement" in the event of any nuclear attack by, say, Pakistan.

The very talk of 'minimum deterrence' highlights our confused perception of the dimensions of the nuclear war. Security involves the capability to absorb the full intensity of a nuclear attack and the retaliatory ability to inflict unacceptable damage on the enemy. That is true deterrence and it is credible only if the enemy understands, not the bland assurances that we will be able to "retaliate at short notice when the need arises".

Once the nuclear status of India and Pakistan is understood and acknowledged mutual deterrence would make it possible for confidence building measures to evolve on a mutually agreed basis. After possessing a minimum deterrent capability and survivable delivery system, it would not be necessary, at least for India, to enter into a nuclear arms race. Since deterrence would be the objective, and not the accumulation of a large arsenal, a South Asian nuclear arm race would not be needed. The proposal of nuclear free South Asia is not in conformity with the prevailing realities, and what we can do is to attempt to create a nuclear weapons-safe South Asia. Mutual arms reductions and confidence building can be at tempted once nuclear stability is reached in South Asia.

There is a deliberate Western policy to project an exaggerated over-nuclearised scenario in South Asia where tactical nuclear weapons are integrated even in routine military exercises. Therefore, a need to maintain 'nuclear restraint' while trying to save the situation through regional arms control measures [sentence as published]. The Seymour Hersh article, in the NEW

YORKER, was one such plant about events in 1990 that supposedly almost led to a nuclear war between the two countries. But this policy has to be viewed in the light of what happened with the much-publicised Indo-Russian cryogenic engine deal. More than the concerns about non-proliferation, and potential uses of the rocket, it was a message to India that it would be impossible to operate independently of the USA as far as proliferation is concerned; and it would not be possible for the Russians to rescue India, like in the past. One flaw in this approach is the continuing and wishful habit of treating India and Pakistan at par. Any parity, if it has to be calculated at all, can only be between India and China. With the prevalence of the India-Pakistan one, formulations of the Cold War era are again dominating South Asia.

Closed-door 'clubs' and 'regimes' intending to impose unilateral sanctions and restrictions on technology in a discriminatory manner cannot prevent proliferation. Neither is this possible only through the arms-reduction approach. The Missile Technology Control Regime has not been as effective a deterrent as it is claimed. Pakistan's missile programme has not suffered, for example. As China pointed out in October 1993, "conditional moratorium designed to maintain nuclear superiority while refusing to renounce nuclear deterrence and commit ourselves to complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons is of no significance".

There has been talk that while India may not sign the NPT, it will unilaterally give an assurance to abide by its provisions. Obviously, such proposals have not taken into consideration the ineffectiveness of the International Atomic Energy Agency verifications as far as clandestine diversions are concerned. We know too well about Israel, South Africa, Iraq, Pakistan and North Korea.

Since the objective of our nuclear policy is no longer valid, continuation with ambivalence would serve no purpose. Merely reiterating that India would not be the first one to introduce nuclear weapons in the region cannot take the place of a definite policy option. That is possible if steps are taken to trade off costly conventional forces for nuclear capability while simultaneously pursuing regional confidence building measures. This would not only lower the risk factors but reduce the danger of the use of nuclear weapons, by design or accident.

Ministers Assail Pakistani 'Support to Subversion'

BK2302100494 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] The government will continue to urge Pakistan at every available opportunity to stop its support to subversion and terrorism directed against India. The minister of state for external affairs, Mr. R.L. Bhatia, informed the Rajya Sabha in a written reply that New Delhi has apprised the international community of Pakistan's role in these activities. He termed this approach by

Pakistan as totally unacceptable and in violation of the Simla agreement and universally accepted norms of international conduct.

The Lok Sabha was told that there has been an increase in firings by the Pakistani troops at Indian posts in the Uri, Punch, and Rajaori sectors during the past few months. The minister of state for defense, Mr. Mallikarjun, told the house in a written reply that all such developments are carefully assessed and appropriate and timely steps taken. He told the members that our troops are fully prepared to meet any eventuality.

Iran

Minister Urges Preservation of Iraqi Unity, Territory

LD2302174594 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Our country's foreign affairs minister has declared the Islamic Republic of Iran's opposition to the stances of some arrogant powers favoring the partition of Iraq. Moreover, he emphasized the preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity and unity.

In his meeting today with Mr. Sa'd al-Faysal, Iraq's deputy foreign affairs minister, and his accompanying delegation, Mr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati called for the resolution of the two countries remaining problems, and the continuation of talks aimed at creating mutual trust and expanding bilateral ties.

According to a Central News Unit's report, in this meeting, which was also attended by the deputy foreign minister in charge of international affairs, as well as the head of the Iranian negotiating team, Mr. Sa'd al-Faysal presented a report about the talks held with the Iranian team. He explained the viewpoints of the Iraqi side and said: The two countries delegations have discussed border issues, POWs, the missing in action, and a number of other issues and have reached understanding in some areas.

The Iraqi deputy foreign minister also expressed the hope that the visit by Mr. Velayati to Iraq may open a new chapter in relations between the two countries.

U.S.-Russian Relations Viewed After Espionage Case

LD2302205894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Unattributed commentary: "Tension in U.S.-Russian Ties"]

[Text] The U.S. Justice Department officials said yesterday that they have arrested a key official of the CIA and his wife on the charge of espionage in favor of the former Soviet Union and also Russia. They described it as one of the greatest events in spying operations so far.

In the wake of the disclosure of this news, U.S. President Bill Clinton announced that he has ordered an enquiry and investigation in order to speedily clarify the details of such an event.

The subject of espionage and the reason why Russia and America, under the conditions when the Cold War has already ended, are trying to get informed of one another's secrets, have drawn the attention of the world people.

At the end of the Cold War the heads of the CIA and the Russian intelligence organization, KGB, in their speeches, had dismissed continuation of the past policies that arose from mutual distrust and proposed cooperation in various fields. But facts now show that both countries still lack trust toward the other. For this reason they continue to make use of their spy organizations for acquiring secret information on the actions and decisions adopted by the opposing country.

America is now trying to acquire precise information on Russian policies in various parts of the world, especially in the newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union and possibly to create grounds for its political influence in them. In this regard one may refer to the murder of a CIA official in Georgia last year. That event roused Moscow's anger, vis-a-vis America.

It appears that spying measures of America, in order to penetrate Russia and the newly-independent republics, have led to the fact that Russia's spy organization too pursues its operations to counter the rival's designs. However, it often happens that spy organizations, based on their facilities, penetrate sensitive administrative and intelligence centers of the opposing country. Of course such an act, based on undermining the prestige of one of these two states, may bring sharp reactions in its wake.

In connection with the disclosure of the recent spying episode, it appears that Mr. Clinton is extremely wrathful and it is probable that he may adopt fresh decisions on U.S.-Russian diplomatic ties. Inflection of this blow on the Clinton Administration will compel Washington to have a closer survey of the rulers in Moscow and to adopt caution in its ties. But despite this one cannot stress the point that America will also reassess its policies on supporting the reformists and checking the ultra-nationalists. This is because in such case America will have to ready itself for return to the Cold War era and intense rivalry between the CIA and the KGB.

ABRAR: Latest Iran-Iraq Talks 'Partly Positive'

LD2402112694 Tehran IRNA in English 0906 GMT 24 Feb

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 24, IRNA—The Persian daily 'ABRAR' Thursday predicted that foreign ministers of Iran and Iraq will meet in the near [word indistinct]. Referring to the visit by an Iraqi Foreign Ministry delegation to Iran, ended yesterday, the morning daily

said in its editorial that the two sides assessed the outcome of Tehran negotiations as partly positive.

Some informed sources believe that a better atmosphere prevailed over the negotiations as compared to the previous talks held in Baghdad, the daily said adding that it seems that new horizons have been opened up to the bilateral ties. However, it added, Iraqis continue to insist on some of their positions. "A country which has plunged the region for almost ten years into war and adopted an absolutely deterrent diplomacy towards peace and tranquility, should not imagine that can regain the lost confidence overnight even if it would have abandoned its past policies.

"Since the trend of the talks is evaluated as being positive, foreign ministers of the two countries would meet in the near future to promote the level of negotiating delegations and accelerate the process of following up bilateral issues," ABRAR concluded.

IRGC General Says Country Not for Nuclear Weapons

*LD2302211794 Tehran IRNA in English 2027 GMT
23 Feb 94*

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 23, IRNA—Major General Mohsen Rezaie in an interview with the English daily TEHRAN TIMES scoffed at Western media reports claiming Iran was for nuclear weapons.

"Political logic, morality, our own culture, and above all the situation in today's world does not allow us to have such deadly weapons."

The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) in an interview to be published Thursday, also said that political wisdom demands us not to go for the weapons which could cause devastation for humanity.

"The eight-year-old Iraqi imposed war is proof of the real nature of our combatants who never violated the internationally recognized norms concerning wars," he added.

"That Iran is trying to acquire nuclear weapons ...is just a baseless rumor," Rezaie said.

Commenting on the Persian Gulf he said, the geographical situation of the waterway is such that the deep water is on Iran's side which enables the Islamic forces to keep alien warships under surveillance.

Without going into details he said that there was a plot hatched by Britain, Israel and the United States to keep regional tensions high.

"I tell my friends in the UAE to listen to my advice as Iran wants to continue friendly relations with all the sheikhdoms," he added.

On the post-war role of the IRGC, Rezaie said that the IRGC was busy with extensive construction projects in the country.

Daily Cites Saudi Overproduction for Low Oil Prices

*LD2302095794 Tehran IRNA in English 0614 GMT
23 Feb 94*

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 23, IRNA—The English daily TEHRAN TIMES' here Wednesday commented on the Saudi motive behind an untimely, unnecessary and economically unjustified extravagance as buying passenger planes from the U.S.

The daily's editorial said that the kingdom, after the Desert Storm, had failed to transfer the 'special' relationship it enjoyed with George Bush to the Clinton Administration and commented that Washington's refusal to send an ambassador to Saudi Arabia for more than two years was an indication of the cold shoulder treatment Riyadh had been getting from the U.S.

It wrote that to allure the U.S. into old relationship, the Saudis had unveiled its petro-dollar and added that this splurge had serious consequences for other regional countries.

"Saudi's increased production has glutted the market and caused oil prices to fall from dlr. [dollars] 18 to dlr. 12 per barrel in 1993, reducing the purchasing power of the Persian Gulf petroleum producers and making such extravagancies detrimental to their economies."

Considering the estimated Saudi production increase, and its refusal to cooperate with other OPEC members to stabilize the overall production level, the article believed it would be unrealistic to expect a fair price for oil any time soon.

"In the event that OPEC oil ministers fail to reach an agreement to lower production levels in their scheduled March 25 meeting, crude prices could fall to dlr. 11 per barrel. Reaching a consensus on production levels is contingent upon the realization, by overproducers, that regional and national interests have the highest priority when it comes to political and economic policies," the editorial concluded.

U.S. 'Concern' Over Ties With Pakistan Examined

LD2302225094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Unattributed commentary: "U.S. Concern Over Closer Ties Between Iran and Pakistan"]

[Text] The head of the foreign relations committee in the U.S. House of Representatives, Mr. Lee Hamilton, in an article which appeared in yesterday's issue of the daily NEW YORK TIMES, has stressed what he has described as the danger of Pakistan-Iran closeness, calling on the

U.S. Administration to reconsider its ties with Pakistan and provide the ground for the improvement of Washington-Islamabad ties.

The noteworthy point in Mr. Hamilton's article is that he has expressed concern over the reduced U.S. influence in Pakistan and increased influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran and China in that country. Besides, he has also mentioned the often repeated claim that Iran is trying to acquire nuclear weapons.

The article is worth pondering from two aspects. First, as has been confirmed by the world bodies, including the exports of the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, Iran has no plan whatsoever to use nuclear energy for military purposes. And second, what the U.S. official has described as the so-called increasing influence of Iran and China in Pakistan are actually the joint efforts of the three countries, coupled with their good will, to expand regional cooperation.

In the political lexicon of the White House the word influence actually means to be forerunner of domination whereas the foundation of Iran's ties with Pakistan, by being away from any political ups and downs, is based on the principle of good neighborly ties and nonintervention in each other's affairs and is set on the track of making these ties evermore stronger.

Meanwhile China considers Iran as a very important country in west Asia, specially in the Persian Gulf, which has a strategic role in maintaining peace and stability in the region. Iran and China have had very high trade exchanges during the recent years and in addition to Pakistan's stability and the recent visit to Iran by the prime minister of that country, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, have depicted a very bright prospect for the future of the Pakistan-Iran ties.

If we also take into account China's serious inclination of expanding ties with the Economic Cooperation Organization, ECO, we can understand the very roots of the U.S. fear from closeness between Iran and Pakistan. Trade exchanges in the region, which spreads from South Asia to Caucasia and Central Asia, with China being next door, means the creation of a strong and independent economic pole in the world; the world over which the United States wants to establish its economic domination under the cover of the new world order. This, and nothing else, is the main cause of concern for the head of the foreign relations committee in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Human Rights Allegations Termed 'Political Ploy'
LD2202174394 Tehran IRNA in English 1544 GMT
22 Feb 94

[IRNA commentary: "Allegations on Human Rights Violation a Political Ploy"]

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 22, IRNA—Independent observers interpret the allegation made against Iran on human rights violation by the U.N. envoy as a means to exert political pressure on Iran.

In his recent report the special envoy of the U.N. Human Rights Commission, Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, with the intent to damage Iran's image in the world public opinion, has charged Iran with cases including violation of political and social freedoms and terrorism.

This is while Iranian officials, including the Head of the Judiciary Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, have termed the allegations biased and a political ploy to pressure Iran.

The pressure is of course by the Western powers that do not favor Iran's active role in the region and its independent stance with regard to such important regional development as Gaza-Jericho compromise deal.

Stressing the existence of political and social freedom in the country, Iranian officials state that all the points mentioned in the constitutional law on the precise observation of individual rights and the preservation of the rights of the religious minorities are respected and practiced in Iran.

The existence of freedom of activity for political groups, the progressive nature of laws and judicial system of the country and freedom enjoyed by the religious minorities prove this fact. This has been confirmed by leaders of religious minorities and independent observers who have visited Iran.

The restatement of these allegations and unfounded matters about human rights violation in Iran at Western circles and mass media has created numerous questions.

Galindo Pohl's report which is a repetition of previous claims was published following the massive Feb. 11 rallies (marking the anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution in 1979).

To any impartial observer, the rally was full of meanings and implications and removed numerous doubts instilled in the world public opinion about the popularity of the Islamic government in Iran.

On the other hand, the report should be considered connected with the firm stances recently taken by the Iranian official in condemning the genocide of Bosnian Muslims by the Serbs and the compromise accord in the Middle East.

The fact that five years have passed since the issuance of the verdict on the apostate Salman Rushdie, the author of the Satanic Verses, and the futile political and economic pressures by the West on the Islamic Republic of Iran to revoke the verdict can be mentioned as other reasons behind presentation of this report.

Exertion of pressure to make Iran compromise and move along with the policies of the West is the main goal that the United States and its allies constantly are pursuing

by publicizing such false claims. This is while Galindo Pohl's colleagues have overlooked human rights violations in the countries allied with the United States.

Another important point in this report and similar claims is that Iran is accused of state terrorism when it is a major victim of terrorism itself and this is something that those claiming to support human rights have always ignored.

The recent assassination attempt on the life of the Iranian president Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Feb. 1 during the Ten-Day Dawn inauguration ceremonies (marking the anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution in 1979) and the November 29 hijacking of a Fokker friendship passenger plane belonging to the Oil Ministry to Iraq are among more recent cases, not to mention over a decade of post-revolution victimization of the Iranian nation at the hands of Western-supported terrorist outfits.

The allegations on human rights are brought forth at a time when tens of thousands of innocent Muslim Bosnian children and women are being martyred in the heart of Europe and hundreds of thousands are facing the prospect of being massacred or raped.

The outrageous violations of the rights of the Muslim Palestinian nation by the Zionists are among other issues which have been neglected in the files of the so-called human rights organizations.

The double standard in dealing with the world events by international organizations is not something that Muslim nations can overlook.

Efforts Against Drug Trade Detailed; Cooperation Noted

NC2202102494 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 22 Feb 94*

[Commentary by News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] The 30th session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs opened in Damascus yesterday. The Tehran Declaration, which was approved in 1371 [year beginning 21 March 1992] by all members, is the most important focus of the session. During the Damascus conference, the latest developments concerning drug smuggling in the Middle East and the way to confront poppy cultivation and the laundering of money obtained from drug trafficking will be discussed.

During the past decade the Middle East has witnessed an increase in drug production, so much so that some countries in the area have become major heroin and opium exporters. Pakistan and Afghanistan are among the countries facing increasing difficulties from an increase in poppy cultivation despite the struggles by their police forces. In areas in Pakistan that are far from

the central government and outside the control of the police force, drug smugglers are manufacturing and refining narcotics in large laboratories. The existence of remote mountainous regions in Pakistan and civil wars and conflicts in Afghanistan for many years have paved the grounds for the growth of drug trafficking groups and the conversion of wheat fields into fields for the cultivation of narcotics.

Unfortunately, because of its location on the international drug transit route from the Golden Crescent to Europe, Iran has gained special importance in the Middle East for large drug trafficking groups. Thus, the major problem that the Islamic Republic of Iran is facing in its fight against the big drug networks is, more than anything else, the problem of regional smuggling that is carried out from outside its borders. Smugglers enter the country primarily through the 1,400-km long eastern border and attempt to transfer narcotics to Europe.

On this basis, in our country special programs have been introduced, including the establishment of border observation posts and roving and stationary bases, the creation of a prohibitive zone in part of the border region, and ambush and destruction operations, all of which have helped to destroy many networks.

During recent years, because of more control on the eastern border and increased field operations, large narcotics bands have decided to alter their transit routes. Some from the southern route have chosen Persian Gulf countries, while others from the northern route have chosen Central Asian countries. However, Iran continues to be considered the major route.

On this basis, efforts by law enforcement forces have intensified and the number of narcotic finds are increasing each year. For example, the quantity of narcotics found during the past 11 months increased 25 tonnes from the same period last year.

On the regional level, as a pivotal country in the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO], the Islamic Republic of Iran has started new operations within its framework. In the future, a memorandum of understanding is to be signed between Iran and Pakistan, with UN cooperation, under which the control of drugs in the region will be further facilitated and coordinated.

The Islamic Republic's efforts in the Middle East have led to praises by the UN secretary general's executive deputy in charge of narcotics control and by the Interpol secretary general. Iran is trying—through regional cooperation and by intensifying the struggle at home—to create a healthier and better society for the younger generation. Within this context, the continuation of the struggle and a more serious approach in implementing the law-enforcement forces' programs are of great importance.

Second Five-Year Plan Direction in Sectors**Senior Expert Students***94LA0079A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian
22 Dec 93 p 20*

[Text] Tehran, 25 Azar [16 Dec]—The number of students at the expert guidance and doctoral levels has been increased for higher education in the Second Five-Year Plan.

Dr. Hashemi-Golpayegani, minister of culture and higher education, announced the above at the 14th conference of educational deputies from universities and institutions of higher education. He discussed the shortage of professors and programs at this ministry. He said: This ministry must create an adequate incentive to attract Iranian specialists outside the country. Likewise, special facilities and resources must be created for teachers and instructors working at the universities to continue their studies to higher levels and programs.

The minister of culture and higher education said: The Ministry of Culture and Higher Education has given the ministries and government organizations the prerogatives to enable them to meet the needs of the ministries and government organizations.

Dr. Salehi, deputy minister of culture and higher education also announced during a speech: Based on the provisions that have been made, by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan, we will have about 46,000 expert guidance students and 5,000 doctoral students. He added: There are now about 16,000 students studying in expert guidance and doctoral programs.

Subsidy Payments*94LA0079B Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian
16 Jan 94 p 13*

[Text] Economics Division. Subsidies will be paid in the nation's Second Five-Year Economic Development Plan to producers and buyers of housing who conform to the regulations of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Construction.

These subsidies will be direct and will constitute 6 to 10 percent of the facilities received from banks for building or buying housing.

The minister of housing and urban construction said these subsidies will total 1,314 billion rials during the Second Five-Year Plan.

Engineer 'Abbas Ahmad-Akhundi, speaking yesterday to a group of reporters, added: The rate for the banking facilities received for housing in the Second Five-Year Plan and in next year's budget is 15 percent, and this rate will be the same for both large and small units.

He said: Based on the Second Five-Year Plan, the ceiling on subsidies for mass builders who build housing for teachers and those who have sacrificed will be 10 percent.

An 8-percent rate will be given to other government mass builders and a 6-percent rate will be given to individuals undertaking housing construction, provided that regulations are observed.

Akhundi mentioned the policy of increasing rental housing units in the year 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] as one of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Construction's programs. He added: Low-cost capital will be provided to individuals who build rental units or rental purchase units.

He discussed the conditions for giving subsidies to those who build housing units. He said: As in the First Five-Year Plan, in the Second Five-Year Plan land will be transferred at the finished cost. The new policy of paying direct subsidies applies both to the builder and the user of housing.

Continuing, Akhundi added: In the Second Five-Year Plan, means will be given through the creation of housing savings funds to individuals who have accounts in these funds. To solve the housing problem, the government intends to mobilize low-cost capital resources to minimize the cost of completion.

He discussed the ministry's policy to expedite activities in the new cities. He said: To carry out the work of preparation and infrastructure installations in the industrial cities, we will support private sector capital. Of course, the relevant costs will still be obtained from the applicants.

Akhundi discussed the production of standard construction materials. He said: In the Second Five-Year Plan this ministry's Center for Construction and Housing has been required to obtain samples from units producing construction materials and to approve or not approve the products from the aforementioned units, and violators will be dealt with in accordance with regulations.

He explained: In the Second Five-Year Plan the policy to decrease foundation size, to produce mass housing, to support the low-income classes and to improve rural housing is on the government's agenda.

Likewise the Ownership and Rental Law will be amended with the goal of further spreading the culture of renting.

Education in Ministry of Mines, Metals*94LA0079C Tehran RESALAT in Persian 29 Dec 93
p 5*

[Text] Tehran, (IRNA)—At the closing ceremonies for the Second Exhibition of Photographs of Geological and Mining Phenomena, the minister of mines and metals said: More than 15 billion rials has been allocated to

raise the educational level of this ministry's personnel in the area of mines and metals.

Engineer Hoseyn Mahluji said: In the area of training in the Second Five-Year Plan, this ministry will spend twice as much on the aggregate under its authority.

He said: The Ministry of Mines and Metals is prepared to assist any college or university that is active teaching in the mines and metals sector, and it will place the resources of the organizations under its authority at the disposal of these institutions.

This exhibition, which opened on 27 Azar [18 December], closed on Sunday with the presentation of prizes to the photographers who took the 10 best pictures.

Khamene'i's Views

94LA0079D Tehran ABRAR in Persian 19 Dec 93 p 2

[Text] Mashhad, ABRAR Correspondent—Hojjat ol-Eslam Sobhani-Niya, member of the Speaker's Council and Majles deputy from Nishabur, discussed His Holiness Ayatollah Khamene'i's guidance concerning the policies of the Second Five-Year Plan yesterday morning before a gathering of reporters after a meeting of the Khorasan Province Administrative Council.

Our correspondent reports that he said: In this plan, emphasis has been given to social justice, strengthening the values of the revolution, transferring economic institutions to the people and sound management.

The full text of the exalted leader's views, which was given to reporters by Hojjat ol-Eslam Sobhani-Niya, is as follows:

1. Observing social justice—

A. Best division of public resources.

B. Collecting taxes based on income.

J. Legal and serious support for society's oppressed classes in areas that pertain to services from the government and the judiciary. [sentence as published]

D. Giving more attention and aid to the deprived and rural areas in various areas, especially the creation of health care employment and expanding classroom and educational space.

R. Adopting measures suitable for preventing the accumulation of inflated wealth and creating employment observing regional talents and priorities. [sentence as published]

S. Expanding and improving the social security system. [sentence as published]

2. Reinforcing and promoting the values of the revolution in providing financial and government resources by giving priority to those who use these resources to

develop the country and promote growth of the revolutionary and Islamic values, and to those who have made great effort to strengthen the revolution and the Islamic government, such as those who have sacrificed, combatants and basijis.

3. Expanding domestic production, especially in the area of agriculture, meeting society's basic needs and decreasing imports of consumer and unnecessary goods, along with increasing the quality of the nation's products and expanding nonoil exports.

4. Correcting and reforming the administrative and judicial system until a situation is reached where the Five-Year Plan is implemented properly to reach its goals by (a) reducing volume, (b) increasing activity and efficiency, (c) employing worthy, religious and committed managers, (d) preparing the needed laws, and (r) preparing a system of supervision and reducing ethical shortcomings such as working too little, taking bribes, indifference in the performance of duties and shuffling paper.

5. Giving the necessary attention to the social sectors and expanding their share in the Five-Year Plan.

6. Directing all executive and propaganda activities towards spiritual growth and ethical excellence in society by (a) deepening and expanding sensitivities and religious belief, (b) spreading revolutionary values, (c) preserving human dignity, (d) creating law and order and a spirit of work, effort and self-sufficiency, (r) concern for and prevention of waste, consumerism and excess.

7. Observing priorities in infrastructure and noninfrastructure investment with the goal of completing the chain of production for domestic consumption and exports and eliminating the nation's need for foreign countries in major consumer goods and basic needs, completing semicompleted projects, meeting the nation's minimum defense needs, preventing investment in areas that are not compatible with these goals and cause the waste of capital or the loss of resources.

8. Attention to and serious concern for public participation in the nation's construction and observing the following points in affairs pertaining to the transfer of economic institutions to the people—

A. Transferring assets to meet the goals of the plan and not for personal goals.

B. Working within the framework of the Constitution.

J. It must not threaten national security or undermine the rule of Islamic and revolutionary values. [sentence as published]

D. It must not undermine the system of government, undercut the rights of the people or create monopolies.

R. Attention must be given to sound management. [sentence as published]

9. The necessary measures must be taken for worthy and continuous supervision of the implementation of the Five-Year Plan and preventing the implementation of personal taste.

10. Strengthening the nation's defense foundation to the extent needed and limiting the policies that are announced.

11. Observing the following points in monetary and banking policy—

A. The gradual elimination of domestic borrowing.

B. Taking the necessary measures to revive the tradition of interest-free loans in the nation's banking system.

J. Facilitating access to credit for those who have the working, intellectual, and technical abilities. [sentence as published]

D. Taking the measures necessary to keep the country from taking foreign loans and making efforts for gradual release from current commitments.

12. Observing the Islamic Republic's announced principles in foreign policy and emphatic attention to honor, wisdom and our interests.

Industrial Sector's Role

94LA0079E Tehran ABRAR in Persian 9 Dec 93 p 4

[Text] The sum of 1,421 billion rials [Rls] has been provided for investment in industrial sector work in the Second Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan.

Engineer Mohammad Reza Ne'matzadeh, minister of industries, gave a press conference in which he announced the above. He said: Of this amount, Rls482 billion is for the difference between subsidies and banking facilities, Rls820 billion is for semicomplete projects, and Rls110 billion is for development and application research and study.

He added: In this ministry's organizational plan, in the event investments are made, Rls20,000 billion are provided by the government and the private sector, and the growth of industry's added value is to be 6.2 percent. If the budget is not procured and there is no government support, we will not achieve this goal in the Second Five-Year Plan.

The minister of industries cited as the industrial sector's main goals in the Second Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan the giving of roots to industrial production, increasing the profitability of production and raising its usability, making the desired use of existing industrial capacities, increasing the competitiveness of the nation's industrial production on international markets, increasing industrial employment, raising society's standard of living and protecting the environment.

Engineer Ne'matzadeh then discussed the importance of the technical studies and development and application research sectors. He said: To achieve this goal Rls150 billion will have to be invested, and the Plan and Budget Organization has confirmed Rls110 billion of this amount.

Continuing, the minister of industries discussed the fact that in the First Five-Year Economic Development Plan 180 research and development units were created in production units. He emphasized the necessity to increase these units in the Second Five-Year Plan. He said: It is expected that this number will triple under the Second Five-Year Plan. He said: Since the position of research in this country is quite low, it is necessary that the government give attention to this sector.

This sector needs to have Rls600 billion credit allocated to it from the development budget. If these credits are obtained we will see 2 percent added value in this sector.

Engineer Ne'matzadeh cited aid in the creation of industrial infrastructure as another of this ministry's aims. He said: To create industrial villages, in view of the increase in the price of foreign exchange, credit of Rls350 billion is needed.

He then discussed the proposed notes that pertain to the deprived areas. He added: The portion of profits from companies and economic activities that is used to invest in the priority areas will be tax exempt.

He also added: In the annual budgets the government is required to allocate the credits needed to procure infrastructure resources including water, electrical power, gas, access roads and industrial villages, in such a way that at least 70 percent of the costs for preparing industrial villages or industrial and mining projects located in the nation's deprived areas and 50 percent of the costs of preparing other industrial villages in the municipalities which are not province centers will be paid out of the development budgets.

The minister of industries continued: To implement policies that encourage and reinforce development and spread industries and mines in the deprived areas, the government is required to pay 50 percent of the annual costs of consumer electricity, as well as the foreman's and worker shares and social insurance premiums in the industrial and mining units located in the nation's deprived and underprivileged areas. This money will come from part of the revenues obtained through customs levies and commercial profits taxes on imported goods.

Engineer Ne'matzadeh complained about the Plan and Budget Organization's cut in the proposed budget for the Industrial Planning Council. He said: Because industry and employment must be created in the country and the share of the nation's appropriate export must be increased, these changes will create problems to some extent for the industrial sector.

He then discussed progress of hardware in the nation's industries in the First Five-Year Plan. He said: In the Second Five-Year Plan attention has also been given to the development of software.

The minister of industries said: In view of the fact that the electronics industry is undergoing striking growth in the country while in Iran electronics makes up only 0.2 percent of GNP [gross national product], to support development research and innovation and to advance this industry, an Electronics Industries Development Support Fund will be created.

In the area of exports he also discussed matters such as the establishment of insurance for exports, the provision of credit facilities for exporters, the creation of a permanent exhibition for industrial export goods, activation of the committee to develop nonoil exports, activation of commercial representation by opening exports in foreign countries, and other things.

In conclusion he asked researchers, writers, and translators to contact this ministry and make use of its available facilities if they have foreign books and articles and are having problems getting them printed and published.

Director of KEYHAN Newspapers Appointed
94LA0080A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian
29 Dec 93 p 4

[Text] Tehran, 2 Dey [23 Dec] (KEYHAN-E HAVA'I News Service)—Following the resignation of Seyyed Mohammad Asghari, supervisor of the KEYHAN Institute, His Holiness Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the revolution, issued an order appointing Hoseyn Shari'atmadari as his representative and supervisor of the KEYHAN Institute.

The text of the order appointing the new supervisor of the KEYHAN Institute is as follows:

In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate

Mr. Hoseyn Shari'atmadari, may your successes continue:

In view of the resignation of Seyyed Mohammad Asghari and with appreciation for his continuous and concerned effort as a worthy cultural leader, I appoint you, an esteemed public figure with high merit and an unusual record of revolutionary and cultural service from an exalted family of martyrs, as my representative and supervisor of the KEYHAN Institute.

KEYHAN is a great institution and has vast capacities. It is necessary to make the best use of this asset for the growth and advancement of the thought, culture, and awareness of the dear nation of Iran.

The press in Islamic and revolutionary Iran has a great responsibility on its shoulders to guide thought, explain the truth, and defend against the assaults of foreigners. Indifference towards the intellectual needs of the nation

of Iran and indifference to their Islamic and revolutionary aspirations, which is evident in some of the nation's current press, is an evil that will not be forgiven in the judgment of our people now or in the future, and ultimately before the court of God in the hereafter. Rebellion and opposition to these aspirations unfortunately also exists in a number of publications, which abuse the freedoms to which the Islamic Republic of Iran adheres, and this will not be forgotten.

KEYHAN is a publication that, praise God, has advanced on the path of growth and interests and has not been contaminated. Even so, this institution is expected to make its positive role as prominent and profound as possible, and to advance all its affiliated publications to the highest level possible.

In this great mission, you must ask for guidance, success and help from God and you must make use of the aid of worthy colleagues, consultants, and committed and skilled executive officers. You must earn the confidence of the people by doing good work, speaking the truth, exercising literary courage, employing the powerful Persian language in conveying information, and doing all these things while maintaining the direction of the Islam of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the principles of the Islamic revolution. You must make the results of your efforts available to as many minds as possible in this talented, outstanding and great nation.

May God help you and your respected colleagues and may you receive the special grace of His Holiness, may Almighty God preserve him.

1 Dey 1372 [22 December 1993], equivalent to 8 Rajab 1314

Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i

Biography of Hoseyn Shari'atmadari

Hoseyn Shari'atmadari was born in 1326 [21 March 1947-20 March 1948] in Damavand and graduated in microbiology from the Tehran University Medical College.

While a student he worked to spread Islamic culture and to promote the views and theories of His Holiness the Imam (peace be upon him) along with great martyrs such as Ayatollah Sa'idi, Professor Motahari, Dr. Bahonar and other dear ones. He was very active in the Islamic struggles against the oppressive monarchy. For this reason, he was arrested by the SAVAK in the year 1354 [21 March 1975-20 March 1976] and was severely tortured in the oppressive monarchy's prisons.

With the triumph of the Islamic revolution, he was released from prison along with other political prisoners by the Muslim people of our country.

After the triumph of the Islamic revolution, Shari'atmadari joined Islamic groups in establishing the Islamic government.

During the sacred defense he was active at the fronts and was even severely wounded once.

The new supervisor of the KEYHAN Institute has various writings. In recent years he has cooperated closely with the nation's press and cultural centers such as the newspaper KEYHAN and the weekly publication KEYHAN-E HAVA'I, by writing numerous political and cultural articles.

KEYHAN's New Director Expresses Views

94LA0080B Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 26 Jan 94 p 3

[Text] Tehran, 26 Dey [16 Jan] (KEYHAN-E HAVA'I News Service)—In a speech to a group of members of the Editorial Board of KEYHAN newspaper, the supervisor of the KEYHAN Institute emphasized: The newspapers must deal with the problems afflicting society and the people and they must carry the message of Islam and the nation.

In his first appearance before a gathering of KEYHAN's reporters, Hoseyn Shari'atmadari, the vice-regent's representative and supervisor of the KEYHAN Institute, discussed the heavy mission of the press in presenting culture and ideas. He added: Today writers are seen as the standard-bearers in the clash between media and cultures. In this arena, nothing is accomplished by media with no message.

The vice-regent's representative in the KEYHAN Institute gave his view concerning criticism in the press as follows: As the leader of the revolution said, the Islamic government is like a battle front, where no one aims his rifle at himself. This is true, but this does not mean that if someone sees someone else sleeping in this trenches he will not startle him awake, or that you do not remind a trench builder when he neglects to make earthworks. Criticism must be constructive, and the language of friends differs from the language of enemies.

Elsewhere in his talk, Shari'atmadari said: The late Imam (peace be upon him) said concerning the press that both what is written and what is not written must be evaluated. The press must bear the message of Islam and the nation and it must be used for their growth and advancement.

During this meeting Mehdi Nasiri, manager of the newspaper KEYHAN, discussed the criticism that is made of this newspaper. He said: In the last few years some of the Western media as well as publications printed outside the country affiliated with the counterrevolutionary minigroups have been hostile towards KEYHAN, but this opposition has no result other than to strengthen our belief that we are right.

Nasiri added: Some domestic forces are also counted among KEYHAN's critics. We never consider ourselves free of mistakes and without need of criticism or reminders, and we even act on the basis of much of the

criticism, but if people sometimes want KEYHAN to change its line and to retreat from its basic positions, I say that we have chosen this path consciously and with much consultation and consideration of interests, and we will continue it.

*** Nabavi Editorials on Aspects of New Budget**

94LA0074A Tehran RESALAT in Persian 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24 Jan 94

[By Seyyed Morteza Nabavi]

[18 Jan pp 1, 3]

[Text]

Oil Revenues in 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] and Foreign Debts

[Part 1]

The general revenues of the country for 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995], projected at 33,767 billion rial-s[Rls], indicate an increase of 42.5 percent compared to the general revenues for this year. Considering the substantial decrease in the price of oil and the inability to achieve the anticipated revenues this year, no clear, hopeful prospects exist regarding oil next year. The disagreement of the members of OPEC regarding the reduction in the production ceiling, the increase in North Sea oil production, the decrease in the cost of oil excavation by non-OPEC countries, and the probability of the entry of Iraq into the world market indicate an uncertain future in terms of the price of oil.

In the United States, it has been projected that if small oil companies suffer losses due to the decrease in the price of oil, they should somehow receive subsidies. Also, the non-OPEC oil-producing countries do not need to raise the price of oil, as they apparently make more of a profit at low prices. In addition, the oppressive powers will likely force Saudi Arabia to increase production in order to keep prices down.

In the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] proposed budget, the government has projected oil revenues at \$12.45 billion, which for the above reasons seems unrealistic. This figure has been reduced to \$9,444,000,000 in the joint meeting of the Economic and Finance and Planning and Budget Committees and to \$10.5 billion in the joint meeting of the Petroleum Affairs and Planning and Budget Committees.

The figure of \$10.5 billion arrived at in the Petroleum Affairs and Planning and Budget Committees is based on the premise that OPEC will lower its production ceiling, and from this perspective the export of 2.1 million barrels per day has been calculated at \$13 per barrel. Certainly, if the OPEC members come to this agreement, that is, to reduce the production ceiling, and act on it, the above-mentioned price will materialize. But, as was pointed out, this is doubtful. Such a determination does not exist at the present time, and other OPEC members

do not support it. The projection of the joint meeting of the Economic and Finance and Planning and Budget Committees seems closer to reality.

Based on a projected oil-demand model, which is dependent on growth in the industrial countries, the price of oil and the price of one fuel, such as coal, have been considered. With the anticipated growth of 1 percent in industrial countries, the OPEC base price next year is figured at \$11. Given this figure, the price of Iranian oil on the average will be \$2 less than this amount, and even \$9,444,000,000 might not materialize.

If the world oil market improves next year, steps can be taken to repay the deferred debts. Also, if in the first six months of 1373 [21 March-22 September 1994] oil revenues go beyond projections, the projects can be prioritized and the next projects implemented as well. New projects must not be started on the basis of the above revenues, because they will not achieve results on time.

This year, there were \$19.5 billion in outstanding debts, of which in the first nine months of this year about \$6 billion were paid, about \$3 billion have been credited, and we have about \$8 billion in late payments. Considering that the late payments will reach \$10 billion by the end of this year, it would seem that if the oil revenues are achieved, the repayment of these debts will be given priority. While there is no clear program for the repayment of debts, it cannot be determined what amount of the foreign currency that is gained can be converted into rials and deposited in the government treasury.

The schedule of payment of foreign debts is the first and foremost issue that must be clarified before any decision concerning the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget is made. Next year, about \$6 billion in debts will be due. The situation of the payment of these debts must be clarified.

Because of the delay in the payment of debts, the country's foreign trade now faces problems, which must be resolved. At present, due to the lack of cooperation of foreign companies and banking networks, goods are purchased at a 20-30 percent higher rate.

Government insurance has also stopped. If the situation with regard to the schedule of debt payments is not clarified, even on the minimum oil revenue accounts cannot be opened. Clarification must be made for next year concerning the amount of oil revenues that must be spent on making the late payments and outstanding obligations, what amount will be spent on set purchases, and what amount of foreign currency will be made available to the Central Bank with which to manage the market. If next year, like this year, we face problems with regard to creating new commitments, certainly these limited dollars cannot be converted into rials. The 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994] budget law projected \$13 billion in new commitments, whereas in actuality the amount will not be more than \$5 billion.

In its proposed 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget bill, the government has anticipated that \$1 billion in oil revenues will be spent on reducing the ceiling of foreign obligations. In other words, out of \$12.4 billion, \$1 billion will be reduced and the remainder multiplied by Rls1,750 and calculated as part of the budget revenues. How much of the foreign currency can be converted to floating-rate foreign currency is questionable, because some of the installments of the debts are based on 70-Rls and 600-Rls dollars and must be paid from next year's revenues.

As some experts believe, in the interests of the country, we must pay our debts as soon as possible, because, considering the recession in the world economy, interest rates are at their lowest level, and as soon as the economy improves, interest rates will rise, in which case, we will be forced to pay high interest on the late payments.

[19 Jan pp 1, 16]

[Text]

Taxes and Tax Revenues in the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] Budget

Part 2

According to this year's budget law, the level of tax revenues is projected at about 5,409 billion rials. However, the likelihood is that, due to the inability to collect "important taxes," this figure will not be achieved. Tax revenues this year are anticipated at Rls440 billion.

Considering the creation of a single foreign-currency rate, from the beginning of 1372 [21 March 1993], the rate of tariffs on imported goods was supposed to be amended. Unfortunately, during the first eight months of this year, such an amendment did not take place. In the past, the level of tariffs was on the average 2 percent of the value of imported goods, which is a very low figure. In the past years, in order to prevent price increases on goods and protect consumers, import tariffs were kept at a low level, and consequently domestic production was harmed. Following the initial reform of import tariffs, the Majles based the level of customs taxes and fees at zero but gave permission to the government to amend and implement the rates through commercial taxes. The government also set commercial taxes at an average of 8 percent. But, as was pointed out, in the first eight months of the year, the old tariffs (averaging 2 percent) continued to be imposed. This 8 percent was put into effect for the last four months of this year.

The level of 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] tax revenues has been projected by the government at Rls6,400 billion, which seems achievable. But the requirement is that customs taxes and fees increase from the present 8 percent to 18 percent on average. An increase in taxes on imported goods, in addition to being in the interest of domestic products, will result in tax revenues being achieved. Considering the minimum of \$7 billion in imports subject to customs tariffs and

commercial taxes, it would not be unlikely for tax revenues to be procured from this sector next year.

The government was supposed to present a bill to the Majles on the level of customs taxes and fees, in accordance with the authorization given by the Majles to the government. This has not been done yet. Considering that the legal deadline is Tir 1373 [22 June-22 July 1994], hopefully the government will devise the bill on tariffs as quickly as possible in order to enable the Majles to carry out an expert study and ratify it, thus enabling us to collect an average of 18 percent in tariffs on the value of imports from the start of 1373 [21 March 1994]. This is a practical step towards achieving the needed tax revenues.

On the other hand, the level of taxes on companies, which was projected at Rls1,443 billion in the 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994] budget law, in practice will go beyond the ratification and will reach Rls1,700 billion, which marks a 17.8-percent increase. Hence, in terms of taxes on companies, the figures for 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] are practical.

The grand leader of the revolution spoke of "observing social justice" and "collecting taxes on the basis of income" as policies governing the Second Plan. These points must be implemented as soon as possible. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, by establishing and equipping a computerized system, is trying to make its information about the tax resources more accurate. At the present time, not all the tax resources are known. For this reason, some social classes are known to carry a heavier tax burden. Some of this problem will be eliminated with the issuance of tax cards on the basis of which actual and legal persons will receive a code. These cards have begun to be issued, and individuals must use them in any transaction. In this way, more precise information on tax sources will be obtained. Hopefully, codes will be given to taxpayers as soon as possible to prepare the grounds for creating an equitable tax system and observing social justice, as Ayatollah Khamene'i emphasized. In this way, tax revenues will increase. It is hoped that the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance will make an effort to implement this plan as soon as possible on a widespread basis in order to ensure that persons with higher incomes pay more taxes.

One of the problems with tax laws is excessive exemptions. According to an expert study, "50 percent of the [potential] tax sources are exempt from the payment of taxes." As a result, the tax burden is imposed on the remaining 50 percent. The issue is not that tax exemptions should be eliminated altogether, but that in some cases it is necessary. However, any kind of exemption must be determined on the basis of accurate, expert calculations. Exemptions must not cause an excessive burden to be imposed on one group of actual and legal persons. At the present, large government and public companies, foundations, and banks, some of which have major incomes, are exempt from the payment of taxes. The treatment of these companies must be revised. This

action, on the one hand, will clarify the tax sources and enter them into the government treasury and, on the other, prevent harm to production. Government and public companies, organizations, establishments, foundations, and banks must deposit their taxes in the Treasury, and if there is need for assistance from a specific source, this amount must be returned to them at the required level. Because the above-mentioned units do not pay taxes, similar units in the nongovernmental and nonpublic sectors, which are required to pay taxes, are unable to compete with them. In addition to reducing costs in certain units compared to others (discrimination in protection), this situation eliminates sound competition. For this reason, in many areas with active government and government-affiliated companies and public establishments, essentially there is no inclination for people to engage in investment and production. Also, some banks, in order to avoid the payment of taxes, have moved towards buying buildings. Hence, the suggestion has been made that tax revenues be distributed justly, a new dynamism be created in production, and tax exemptions be revised. According to an expert estimate, the "GDP" [gross domestic product] ratio in 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994] is 22 percent, and if half of the taxpayers are exempt from tax payments, the result will be that tax pressure at a level of 44 percent will be placed on the other half.

The examination of the budget bill this year will undergo two rounds of discussion, and in the first round of discussions, only the revenues will be examined. Most committees have new tax and fee suggestions for securing revenue resources, some of which are reasonable and some unreasonable. On the whole, this examination will be followed by an increase in the price of goods and services. For example, in order to improve cultural issues regarding education or health and treatment, which are very important, the collection of taxes within the framework of the Constitution may be desirable. But putting taxes on everything is certainly problematic. Will consumers agree to the increase in the price of gasoline from Rhs50 to Rhs120 per liter so that, for instance, the Bandar 'Abbas Refinery can be activated more quickly? Certain issues will be addressed in the following sections of this article in addition to a discussion of Note 25 of the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget bill.

[20 Jan pp 1, 16]

[Text]

Increase in the Price of Kerosene, Gasoline, and Other Oil Products

Part 3

One of the most important characteristics of the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget bill is Note 25. According to this note, if ratified by the Majles, the price of certain government goods and services will increase. The prices of kerosene, gasoline, diesel fuel, natural gas,

electricity, post, and telephone are among the goods and services, which will see increased prices.

At present, the price of gasoline, which in Iran is 50 rials per liter, is Rls200 in Kuwait, Rls270 in the United Arab Emirates (Dubai), Rls1,090 in Turkey, and Rls260 in Qatar. Also, the prices per liter of kerosene are Rls200 in Kuwait, Rls980 in Turkey, and Rls43 in Dubai, all of which are significantly higher than the Rls15 RLS charged in Iran.

The low rate of oil products in Iran has resulted, on the one hand, in the extraordinary growth in consumption of these products and, on the other, the smuggling of these goods into countries on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf, Turkey, and Pakistan. The consumption of kerosene in Iran, with a population of about 60 million people, is equivalent to its consumption in China, with a population of 1.1 billion people.

The level of fuel consumption in Iran at the present is \$10 billion worth annually. Some experts believe that if the present trend of growth in the consumption of oil products continues, in a period of less than 10 years, all domestically produced oil will be consumed. Based on this reasoning, the government has proposed in Note 25 that the prices per liter of gasoline increase from 50 to Rls120, kerosene and airplane fuel from 15 to Rls30, diesel fuel from 10 to Rls20, and heating oil from 8 to Rls10, and the price of natural gas increase from 10.7 to Rls12.4 per cubic meter. According to this proposal, the difference between the above prices will be collected as taxes on the sale of oil products and spent on investments. But the decision on whether the collected taxes will be spent on investment in oil affairs or other areas has been left for the second round of discussions in the Majles.

At the same time, the Ministry of Petroleum, on the basis of Rls1,600 per dollar, has estimated the costs per liter of kerosene, gasoline, diesel fuel, and heating oil without calculating the transportation costs of Rls294, Rls275, Rls263, and Rls134, respectively.

The amounts to be collected as taxes on oil products in 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995], based on the suggestion of the government, will be mainly invested in refining and transportation, according to the ratification of the Majles. The government has projected that 89 percent of investments will be in refining programs, 72.4 percent in transportation, and 7.3 percent production of oil products, through the imposition of the taxes in Note 25 [percentages as published]. The creation of the Arak and Bandar 'Abbas refineries; the building of platforms in the Caspian Sea; the building of fuel stations; the reconstruction and construction of Naftshahr; the building of pipelines; and the development of the Sarakhs natural gas fields, the Oil Industry University, Kangan Natural Gas, and several other projects are among those projects, of which the implementation has been suggested to the Majles by the government from the funds obtained from taxes.

Even though the government has the authority and is able to make a decision in the Economic Council concerning the increase in the price of oil products, due to the social and economic pressures regarding the above-mentioned taxes, it has sent its proposals to the Majles. This is a commendable action worthy of gratitude.

This year, as well, the government intended to increase the price per liter of gasoline to Rls80 through the Economic Council; however, due to the reaction of the Majles, no decision was made in this regard. Offering the proposals in the form of the budget will familiarize the Majles deputies more tangibly with the realities.

Some deputies, on the one hand, expect the plans and projects to expand rapidly and, on the other hand, expect oil products to be offered to the people at a low rate. In making decisions, these two views are contradictory. If the deputies oppose the increase in prices, they must accept the fact that the speed of growth and development will decrease, and progress will be slower. Thus, pressuring the executive officials to implement the projects in their constituent regions is unreasonable. If the Majles is willing to accept an increase in prices at the intended level, it should also be accountable for its consequences.

What facilitates decision making concerning oil products is the calculation of the effects of price increases, especially in regards to fuel. Majles deputies have asked the experts of the government, the Plan and Budget Organization, and the Central Bank to calculate and predict the effects of these increases on other goods and services in order to see whether or not the people can tolerate the inflationary pressures resulting from these increases. Undoubtedly, with the increase in the price of fuel, the cost of transportation will increase, and with the increase in cargo and passenger fares, many goods and services will be affected. The Majles welcomes expert plans by both government organizations and independent experts. These plans must firstly generate conservation with regard to the consumption of oil products. Second, they must prevent pressures being applied to the down-trodden and low-income classes. Third, they should not have unpleasant political, social, and economic effects. And, fourth, no subsidies must be given to the high-income strata.

To subsidize the low-income and deprived classes, in selling natural gas, rates should be based on a sliding scale, and natural gas meters should be used to ensure that the low-income classes and those with low consumption do not face problems. This can force consumers to conserve.

In order to subsidize kerosene, gasoline, and other products, to return to a coupon system, given its ill effects, is not proper. Therefore, a cash subsidy can be put into effect, provided identification is carefully handled and precise information on the income and occupation of individuals is available.

In cities and villages, the public transportation system can be subsidized and prices increased in other areas.

But in cities such as Tehran, where public transportation is insufficient and personal vehicles play a significant role, another solution must be found for the payment of subsidies. Otherwise, the above-mentioned factors will escalate the inflationary effects of the increase in the price of gasoline.

Considering that high-income and well-to-do families consume more fuel, naturally they benefit more from general subsidies, and this is contrary to social justice. On the other hand, the elimination of general subsidies may also create unpleasant effects for the vulnerable classes. In this regard, it is necessary to make careful calculations before appropriate decisions can be made.

Of course, to impose conservation in energy use, in addition to price increases, there are other methods that can be implemented. The development and dissemination of technical knowledge and the spread of a culture of conservation are among them.

God willing, the discussion on Note 25 concerning the increase in the price of services, electricity, post, and telephone in the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget will be continued in the next issue.

Footnote

1. Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar are all oil-producing countries and southern neighbors of Iran. Turkey also, as a neighboring nonoil country, has been used as evidence. If the price of oil products is compared to that of industrial countries, there is more of a gap. At the present time, a liter of gasoline is Rls1,591 in Germany, Rls571 in the United States, Rls1,528 in France, and Rls2,008 in Japan, and the price per liter of kerosene is Rls1,007 in Japan and Rls330 in the United States. The price per liter of diesel fuel is Rls1,190 in Germany, Rls297 in the United States, Rls1,067 in France, and Rls1,328 in Japan. The price per liter of heating fuel is Rls448 in Turkey, Rls171 in the United States, Rls242 in Germany, Rls313 in France, Rls497 in Japan, and Rls5 in Iran. It is noteworthy that these prices are based on the rate of Rls1,600 to the dollar.

[22 Jan pp 1, 20]

[Text]

The Increase in the Price of Electricity, Telephone Communication, and Postal Services in the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] Budget

Part 4

In the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget bill, the government has proposed an increase in the average per kwh [kilowatt hour] price of electricity from 17 rials to Rls33.5. Since there is a relatively clear picture available of the various uses of electricity, making a decision in this regard is simpler than that concerning oil products. At the present time, 38 percent of all electricity consumption is domestic, 32 percent industrial, 18 percent public use (including schools, universities, offices,

mosques, barracks, pharmacies, etc.), and 12 percent for other uses (commercial, agricultural, and mobile). Suitable policies can be devised appropriate to each of these.

The electricity industry requires heavy investment. If we want to avoid blackouts, there is no other way but investment. If investments are calculated at the day's prices, for the production of every kwh of electricity (based on 4.4 cents in foreign currency use at the market rate and Rls10 in rial costs), Rls100 are necessary. Of course, at the present, the cost of electricity, due to the low-rate foreign currency received, is about Rls10. If fuel is calculated on the basis of present prices and the remaining production factors on the basis of the floating rate, the cost of every kwh of electricity will be reduced to Rls50.

The level of electricity consumption at the present is uncontrolled, and the revenues of the country are insufficient for investment in this industry.

In order to prevent blackouts and conserve electricity, the rates must necessarily be modified. Implementing a sliding rate in such a way that no pressure is placed on the lower classes and presenting a correct model to the consumer can solve problems. In this case, those clients who reduce consumption will face lower rates.

The level of usual and reasonable consumption for a family is 250 kwh. This group of consumers, mostly deprived and low-income individuals, can be given cost discounts and pay at the present prices. (Of course, the minimum is different in regards to warm-climate regions that use natural gas air conditioning.) Families that use between 250 kwh and 500 kwh of electricity should pay half the cost (Rls50 per kwh). In addition, families that use 500 kwh and above should pay the total cost (based on Rls50 per kwh). With these measures, 38 percent of electricity consumption will be controlled.

To conserve industrial use, which makes up 32 percent of the total consumption, at the peak hours (maximum use), such as early evening, the price of electricity can be increased in order to allow industrial units to regulate their work shifts so as not to put pressure on the national network.

One of the existing problems at the present is that electricity production must increase a great deal in order to cover service for peak hours. If steps such as those mentioned are taken, there will be less need for large investment expenditures.

A point that must be noted in connection with industry is that the level of electricity consumption, with some exceptions, such as aluminum production, does not effect the cost of industrial production very much. The highest level of electricity consumption is in aluminum production, which uses Rls750 worth of electricity per kg of aluminum production.

The repair of factories can be done in summer, because the consumption load is very high in the summer

months. Most factories make repairs once a year, during which time the consumption load is reduced.

The level of demand can also be used in industry. That is, as consumer demand goes beyond a certain level, it should be followed by an increase in the price of electricity. Also, incentives should be implemented to reduce consumption in the production units, such that if a factory can do its work with 60 kwh of electricity, it will not increase it to 70 kwh.

Public uses, such as schools, mosques, and pharmacies, can be exempt from price increases, and others, such as offices and barracks that have the most waste in public consumption, must be required to pay the costs. Unfortunately, the lights of some government offices are turned on during the daytime, and modifying the price can encourage conservation. In connection with commercial units, as well, the implementation of a progressive rate policy can change the consumption model from high-use to low-use lamps.

In the area of agriculture, considering its essential nature, there should be no price increases, in order to encourage these activities.

In any case, in connection with electricity, various scenarios exist, the best of which can be chosen and implemented in such a way that, in addition to creating conservation, pressure on deprived classes will be prevented and reasonable development will follow.

The average price of a postal parcel is Rls65 at the present. With Rls35 in taxes for 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995], as proposed by the government and if ratified by the Majles, it will be Rls100. One of the problems with this proposal is that the rates are not divided according to urban, intercity, and foreign parcels.

Even though the Postal Company, considering its present revenues, faces problems, the point should be taken into consideration that the least expensive method of communication throughout the world is the postal service.

It is not clear why the Ministry of Post, Telegraph and Telephone monopolizes postal services and does not allow the people to establish parallel postal units (of course, under the supervision of this ministry). This can give people choices and create competition. Private and nongovernmental companies may be able to offer postal services at lower rates. The Constitution does not prohibit the government from issuing permits to the people to engage in postal activities while supervising them. One of the claims that has prevented people from taking charge of postal services is that "private companies charge excessively." The response is that people have a choice, and if this occurs, they will not use such companies.

The increase in price of every pulse [words illegible] from Rls12 to Rls20 on the average in 1373 [21 March

1994-20 March 1995] is another government proposal to the Majles. In other words, for every pulse, Rls8 in taxes will be added. [sentence as published]

In many countries in the world, no money is collected to receive a telephone line, and fees are collected from clients based on the level of calls. However, in Iran, not only are Rls600,000 to Rls1 million collected for every telephone line received, but charges are also made in terms of the rate of pulse. [sentence as published] Any new change in this connection will depend on determining the actual cost of a telephone line. The Communication Management Organization of the Plan and Budget Organization has estimated the establishment of every telephone line on the basis of \$600 foreign currency costs and 148,000-toman rial use at 270,000 tomans, whereas another estimate, based on Rls\$521 in foreign currency expenditures and 30,000 tomans in rial expenditures, determines the cost of every telephone line to be 134,200 tomans. The prices of the Plan and Budget Organization seem less accurate. For this reason, investment on the basis of Rls20 RLS per pulse seems high. [sentence as published]

The last point that can be discussed in connection with Note 25 of the budget law is that if in its first round of discussions the Majles ratifies the taxes on oil products, electricity, communications, and post, the answer to the question of whether the above-mentioned amounts, based on government proposals, will be placed at the disposal of the Ministries of Petroleum; Energy; and Post, Telephone and Telegraph for investment or whether another area will be suggested for their use will come in the second round of discussions in the Majles. In any case, the issue depends on the Majles deputies' determination to more carefully examine the areas for investment from the above-mentioned taxes in the second round of discussions.

[23 Jan pp 1, 16]

[Text]

Government Companies and Banking Funds

Part 5

The budget of government companies and the level of funds granted to them are issues that will be dealt with today, as the discussions of the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget continue. According to the proposed bill, next year, out of about Rls79,687 billion in the national budget, the government will allocate Rls50,023 billion to government companies, Rls5,216 billion to banks, and Rls1,043 billion to for-profit establishments affiliated with the government. In other words, the government has proposed to the Majles that in 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995], more than 70.3 percent of the national budget be allocated to government companies, banks, and for-profit establishments affiliated with the government.

Unfortunately, the outcome of billions of rials in government investments in government companies, banks, and for-profit establishments affiliated with the government is only Rls1,296 billion in profits, taxes, etc., for the government. These units continue to fail to show a desirable return and efficiency, and the losses projected for them amount to Rls4,032 billion.¹ Essentially, why must 34,000 discovered violations occur in government companies every year?²

Lack of care and sufficient supervision of the Majles over the budget of government companies in the past years has created such a situation. Essentially, the examination of the budget of these companies was conferred on their general assembly, which is comprised of a few ministers. In accordance with Article 53 of the Constitution,³ the budget of these companies was presented to the Majles a few years ago. Supervision over the budgets of government companies was more carefully accounted for in the 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994] budget law, but because there was insufficient time in this regard, the government was obliged to carry over the budget of government companies to Khordad 1372 [22 May-21 Jun 1993] and receive permission to spend based on the ratified budget through Shahrvivar [23 August-22 September]. Unfortunately, the government did not present the report on the budget of these companies on time to the Majles.

Another point in connection with the budget of government companies is their number. Some believe that instead of fewer than 500 units reflected in the bill, the number of these companies exceeds 1,000 or 1,500 units. Based on permission received earlier in their charters, these companies were permitted to establish subsidiary companies, which they did. But, unfortunately, the accounts of the subsidiary companies are not reflected anywhere. In addition, no reference is made in the budget laws to the names of all the companies in which the government has shares. Such problems have resulted in a large volume of the Muslim Treasury in the government units not being supervised by the Majles. Even the Auditing Organization and the Accounting Office have no supervision over these units.

Government companies sometimes allow expenditures that are inappropriate to the initial goals of their establishment. The waste and extravagance of these companies require separate detailed discussion, and we will not give examples at this time. The vehicles and other equipment that these companies donate to the related ministries are examples of such extravagance. Some government companies show little profit. Some are exempt from taxes. It is not clear what amount of their reserve is spent on investment or used to eliminate their cash needs. In any case, an examination of government and government-affiliated companies is important from various dimensions. Many of these units can be transferred to the people, and thus both reduce the burden of the government and make their activities "economical."

In the past, if government companies intended to make investments, the government would allocate certain amounts in the general budget for the development of these investments. Following the increase in the volume of government expenditures in the past few years, meeting the investment needs of the government companies has been shifted towards the use of banking funds.

The funds that the government invests in government companies or the funds that these companies receive must somehow be paid. This has not occurred in many of these companies, and the remainder of the debts of the companies to the banks and the Central Bank are increasing regularly.

Government companies will receive Rls7,314 billion in loans in accordance with the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget bill and in exchange will pay Rls2,949 billion of the loans received in the past years. As a result, in terms of next year's budget, Rls4,365 billion will be added to the government debt to the banking system.

If the investment of government companies through the use of banking funds is economically justified, there is no argument, because these funds will be repaid within a reasonable period of time. But, unfortunately, this issue is postponed to the following year's budget, and ultimately, the repayment is placed on the shoulders of the government itself. What has become common in the budget bills is that through the budget, the Central Bank and other banks are obliged to place funds at the disposal of these companies, which is sometimes against the monetary policies. The 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] bill anticipates 12 notes for this purpose.⁴ For example, Note 17 obliges the Central Bank to allocate 100 billion RLS in funds to build a student dormitory, which is by no means economically justified, because when this dormitory is built, it will provide no income to help repay the debt. In fact, this is the kind of budget deficit, which has been transferred to the banking system. Certainly, no one opposes the building of a student dormitory; but this is a matter to which the government must allocate funds from the general budget. The result of such a decision is that it would make the banks economically unsound. The banks must be allowed to work economically if monitoring is to be precise.

Footnotes

¹ If government companies and banks have operational revenues of Rls31,290 billion and their current expenditures are Rls35,322 billion, naturally, they will have Rls4,032 billion in operational deficits.

² Reported by the Accounting Office.

³ Article 53 of the Constitution states: All government receipts will be concentrated in the accounts of the General Treasury, and all payments will derive from ratified funds in accordance with the law.

⁴ Notes 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, 17, 23, 50, 51, 52, 53, and 54.

24 Jan pp 1, 16

[Text]

Cash Flow and Inflation

Last Part

In the previous issue, the discussion concerned the adding of Rls4,365 billion by government companies to the government's debt to the banking system, according to the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget bill, because they fail to repay a major part of the loans received. Also, the emphasis was made that the obligation of the government to repay some of the funds that cannot be repaid to the banks and the Central Bank is, in fact, a sort of budget deficit, which has been transferred to the banking network. This issue will focus on the level of funds received in government companies and private units and their role in cash flow and inflation.

Unfortunately, a great gap also exists at the level of granting funds to people and government sectors. In the 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] budget bill, the government has obliged banks to pay Rls7,598 billion in funds to government and private organizations. Of this amount, Rls6,033 billion are allocated to government and government-affiliated units and Rls1,565 billion to the private sector. Among the government organizations, a large share of these resources will be placed at the disposal of oil, natural gas, petrochemicals, subways, steel, airlines, and sugar cane projects.¹

Next year, if the banks are obliged to pay the funds at the above-mentioned level and the private sector also receives funds at the level of this year, the increased cash flow will exceed 25 percent,² which is inappropriate with the average of 11.7 percent determined in the Second Developmental Plan of the government.

Since the rate of inflation growth has advanced in step with the cash flow, inflation also can increase at the same ratio next year. This is while there is no budget deficit. Otherwise, the cash flow will grow more.

The dear Majles deputies must note that increased cash flow escalates inflation and high prices, unless the ceiling of obligatory funds of the banks and the Central Bank is revised. Through the control of funds, inflation can be harnessed. Considering the limitation on general revenues, it is necessary to decrease the speed of the increase in cash flow in order to prevent the imposition of problematic inflation which mainly targets the deprived strata and low-income classes.

As much as possible, the payment of funds for investments with no economic justification, and of which the repayment by government companies is impossible, must be avoided. This step is considered a kind of budget deficit and causes inflation.

The most important point in connection with the banking network is that the structure of its organization must be reformed and revised. At present, the rate of administrative, organizational, and advertising expenditures of banks is high. Also, the banking network demands a great deal in terms of profit and service charges from loan applicants.

These issues must be reviewed. At the present, the banks transfer many expenditures to loan recipients, including those for advertising, employment, the opening of new branches, expensive decorations, and the construction and purchasing of numerous buildings. The cost of money (equipping of resources) in the banks is higher than it should be, and the people are paying for it.

One of the criticisms of the administration of banks is the composition of the Monetary and Credit Council, a significant number of the members of which are representatives of the ministries that use the funds. To reform the monetary system, the composition of the Monetary and Credit Council must change and mainly be composed of a headquarters, economic officials, and economic experts and not the consumers of the funds. In addition, in order to reform the system of economic decision making, the composition of the Economic Council must also change, because in this council, the consumer organizations make up the majority and promote the uneconomical decisions of the Economic Council.

One criticism, which is true of the work of the banks, is that they have become company owners and entered directly into the administration of companies. Companies that have not been economically sound, which rely on the support of the banking network and suffer significantly from extravagance, must be transferred to the people and become profitable as quickly as possible. Direct investments amounting to 50 percent of the shares must also be transferred to the people.

As monopoly is harmful in many economic activities, the banks must keep monopolies within the framework of Islamic laws and the Constitution. Nonbanking credit establishments must be allowed to engage in activities to provide the grounds for sound competition. With this action, government banks that at the present time consider themselves nongovernmental and public will no longer be able to impose any cost on the users of funds.

Footnotes

¹ The level of loans to be received by some of the companies from the banking system in 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] is as follows: National Oil Company, Rls1,643 billion; Falat-e Qarreh, Rls130 billion; National Oil Products Distribution Company, about Rls166 billion; National Natural Gas Company, Rls226 billion; Iranian Electrical Power Production and Transmission Company, Rls427 billion; National Iranian Steel Company, Rls280 billion; Steel Mill, Rls100 billion; Mobarakeh Steel, Rls120 billion; National Petrochemical Industries Company, Rls1,062 billion; Islamic

Republic Airlines, Rls150 billion; the Iranian National Steel Industries Group, Rls100 billion; Metro Company, Rls100 billion; and Sugar Cane Development and Subsidiary Industries Company, Rls500 billion.

² Next year, from the notes of the budget alone, 16 percent will be added to the cash flow.

Pakistan

Official Protest Lodged Over Embassy Attack in Kabul

BK2402021294 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0100 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto said that the attack on Pakistan's Embassy in Kabul and the intimidation and beating of the embassy staff is regrettable, although Pakistan is extending all possible assistance to the Afghan people on humanitarian grounds. She was talking to newsmen early this morning at Islamabad Airport on her return from Saudi Arabia after performing a minor pilgrimage there. She was referring to a mob of Afghan demonstrators who attacked the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul, smashed windows and furniture, and intimidated and beat the embassy staff. The prime minister said Pakistan has sheltered three million Afghan refugees for more than 10 years and even now a large number of the refugees are present in the country. She said Pakistan has set up camps at Jalalabad in Afghanistan where displaced persons from Kabul are being provided relief. Benazir Bhutto said she is deeply saddened by the incident.

About the rescue of school children who were taken hostage by three armed Afghan gunmen, the prime minister said she is happy that they were safely rescued. She commended the Pakistan Army commandos and their timely and safe action for safely rescuing the children. Ms. Benazir Bhutto also welcomed Afghan President Professor Borhanuddin Rabbani's statement in which he condemned the kidnapping.

Pakistan has expressed regrets over the attack on its embassy in Kabul and has protested with the Afghan Government about this incident. Immediately after hearing the report about the attack by an agitated mob on Pakistan's Embassy in Kabul, Foreign Secretary Shahryar Khan summoned Afghan Ambassador Sardar Roshan to the Foreign Office. The foreign secretary lodged a protest of the Pakistan Government with him on this regrettable incident which is a matter of deep concern. The Afghan ambassador was asked to tell his government to take all possible steps to ensure the security of the embassy and its staff. The Afghan ambassador was also asked to immediately provide full details of the incident and about the well being of the Pakistan Embassy staff. The Afghan ambassador was told that the incident is especially condemnable because it took place during the Pakistan foreign minister's visit to Kabul in

connection with the establishment of peace in Afghanistan. The Pakistan Government is surprised at such a reaction in Kabul in support of a criminal act in which three criminals kidnapped innocent children at gunpoint.

President, PRC Official Meet, Discuss Various Topics

BK2302150694 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] The vice premier and foreign minister of China, Mr. Qian Qichen, called on President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari at the Aiwan-i-Sadr [President House] today and exchanged views with him on various bilateral and regional issues. They expressed satisfaction at the depth and direction of bilateral relations between Pakistan and China. Reviewing various aspects of bilateral cooperation, they shared the desire to further expand it to mutual benefit. During the meeting, regional situation with particular reference to situation in occupied Kashmir and Afghanistan was considered in depth. Both the leaders underlined the need to immediately stop human rights violations in occupied Kashmir and resolve the issue peacefully and in accordance with the wishes of its people and international law. On Afghanistan, the need to restore peace was stressed from both sides. It was felt that the continuing bloodshed was depriving the people of Afghanistan of the fruits of their victory in their struggle against foreign occupation.

Foreign Minister, Qian Qichen Meet

BK2202153094 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Formal talks between Pakistan and China were held in Islamabad today. The talks covered a wide range of bilateral relations and international and regional issues. The Chinese side was led by Chinese Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Mr. Qian Qichen and Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali headed the Pakistan delegation. The Kashmir dispute came under detailed discussion. Both sides expressed their concern over the gross human rights violations in Indian-held Kashmir and were of the opinion that tension in the region would further escalate if a peaceful solution to the problem is not found. Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali drew the attention of his Chinese counterpart to the persistent violations of human rights in the occupied valley. He said because of the recalcitrant attitude of India, the foreign secretaries talks could not make any progress. He said Pakistan would be willing to hold talks with India only if they were ready to improve the human rights situation in Kashmir. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali apprised Mr. Qian of the rationale behind the tabling of the resolution at the current session of the commission of human rights. He said the resolution only requested sending a fact-finding mission to the Indian-held Kashmir. The Chinese vice premier said Pakistan and China should closely coordinate on the Kashmir issue.

On the question of trade imbalances, China and Pakistan agreed that efforts should be made to rectify the adverse trade balance against Pakistan. Experts of the two countries would consult each other in this regard.

In-depth discussions were also held on issues concerning security in South Asia and nuclear nonproliferation. China appreciated Pakistan's principled position on the question of nuclear nonproliferation. The vice premier underlined the need for close coordination between China and Pakistan on issues relating to regional security.

The Chinese vice premier and foreign minister called on the chairman, Senate, Mr. Wasim Sajjad, in Islamabad today. The chairman, Senate, briefed the Chinese vice premier about Pakistan's principled stand on Kashmir and the nuclear nonproliferation issue. He said it would be quite unreasonable to sign any nonproliferation treaty unilaterally when India has a huge nuclear arms buildup. He said Kashmir problem should be resolved through implementation of UN resolutions.

Mr. Qian Qichen also called on the speaker, National Assembly, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, in Islamabad today. The speaker expressed satisfaction over the traditional and time-tested friendship between Pakistan and China. The Chinese vice premier extended an invitation to the speaker, National Assembly, to visit China at the head of a parliamentary delegation.

Qian Qichen Meets Other Officials

BK2302032194 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Qian Qichen, China's vice premier and foreign minister, has emphasized the need of increased cooperation between Pakistan and China in the wake of the recent changes in the international situation. He expressed this feeling during separate meetings with Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad and National Assembly Speaker Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani in Islamabad.

The Senate chairman and the National Assembly speaker explained the latest position regarding human rights violations in occupied Kashmir. While referring to Pakistan's efforts to move a resolution at the UN Human Rights Commission on this, they reiterated Pakistan's commitment to a peaceful solution of the Kashmir issue.

Referring to the Indian press reports on the implications of the disengagement of troops at the Sino-Indian border, Qian Qichen said the Indian news agencies are indulging in propaganda tactics in this matter. He said China will not allow a situation in which India can take advantage of Pakistan.

National Assembly Speaker, Iranian Envoy Discuss Ties

LD2202224094 Tehran IRNA in English 2056 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 22, IRNA—Iran's ambassador to Islamabad Mohammad Mehdi Akhund-Zadeh held a meeting here today with Pakistani National Assembly speaker Syed Yousef Reza Gilani and discussed Tehran-Islamabad economic, political and cultural ties.

The two sides emphasized that the economic potentials of Iran and Pakistan could be used to expand cooperation between the two countries.

Global as well as regional issues and activities of the enemies of Muslims were discussed in the same meeting. Both sides also underlined that the Kashmir issue should be solved on the basis of national aspirations of Kashmiri Muslim people.

At the end, Gilani invited his Iranian counterpart Ali 'Akbar Nateq-Nuri to pay a visit to Pakistan in the coming Iranian new year (to begin March 21).

Editorial Criticizes U.S. Policy in South Asia

BK2202160394 Islamabad KHABRAIN in Urdu 19 Feb 94 p 10

[Editorial: "The Provision of American Defense Equipment to India; a Cause of Anxiety to Pakistani Policy Makers"]

[Text] According to reports emanating from world mass media, two American ordnance companies have offered to supply sophisticated electronics defense equipment to India. This offer made by American companies to India reflects a shift in American policy on South Asia and the contradictions of the U.S. leadership. By the end of last year, the Clinton administration had warned India to desist from making indigenous production of military equipment that may flare up a war frenzy. Hence, in consonance with this policy, the United States has refused to provide super computers to India and has also prevented Russia from providing the latter with rocket engines, which may be used in the manufacture of long-range missiles. To discourage India from producing sophisticated weapons indigenously, the U.S. Government also threatened India that if it manufactures such equipment at home, the United States would sell materials for the manufacture of AWACS planes to Pakistan. After this warning, India obviously halted work on the AWACS system at home and began talks with the United States for the purchase of latest equipment for its air force. However, after the offer of the American companies, besides manufacturing latest equipment, India will be able to achieve indigenous production of AWACS. This way, the Indian Air Force will have superiority in the region. The Indian Air Force is already more powerful than its counterparts in Pakistan and other countries of the region.

This state of affairs is greatly regrettable. This is the reality and every Pakistani with any common sense is fully aware of the fact that the Americans are totally insincere people, and when their purpose served, they become indifferent. During the Afghan war, the United States needed Pakistan. Despite great risks, Pakistan decided to confront Russia. At that time, the United States did not have any objection to Pakistan's nuclear program. Now strong pressure is being exerted on Pakistan to roll back this nuclear program, because now the United States does not need Pakistan to forestall Russian influence. On the contrary, after the downfall of Russia as the superpower, the American policy makers are not only ignoring Pakistan but also are encouraging India on several issues, which is a cause for concern to the political circles and the people of Pakistan.

The offer of sophisticated military equipment to India by the American firms is a cause of anxiety to our policy makers. They should make a careful study of the offer and review the motivations and inspiration behind it. Pakistan is not Nepal, Sri Lanka, or the Maldives. It cannot accept the hegemony of India. However, by joining hands with other regional countries, Pakistan can prepare programs that will be beneficial to all the countries of South Asia. With the help of our neighbors, we can make this region a zone of peace, which ensures the independence, security, and the effective protection of the territorial boundaries of the countries in it. We hope that other regional countries are also not ready to accept the hegemony of India and that they will join hands and cooperate with Pakistan to make the region a zone of peace. We will request that the Government of Pakistan lodge a strong protest against the offer of sophisticated defense equipment to India by the American firms. Pakistan should launch an effective diplomatic campaign to assure the American leadership that Pakistan cannot tolerate Indian hegemony and its policing.

It is also imperative to inform the American leadership that the Indian leadership is making threats of dire consequences to Pakistan because of its moral and political support to the freedom struggle of the Kashmiri people. Pakistan does not have any militaristic or expansionist designs. We would also request that the Indian Government review the situation at home in the global context with a cool head and in a relaxed way and adopt a policy to coexist with other countries of the region, including Pakistan, on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence. We would also suggest that the Indian leadership fulfill its pledges made to the United Nations, grant the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir, and concentrate on eradicating the poverty of its own people instead of browbeating and making threats of dire consequences to Pakistan.

Bhutto Accused of Aiding India in Kashmir

BK2302101594 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 23 Feb 94 p 1

[Text] Karachi—Leader of the Opposition in National Assembly Nawaz Sharif feared that Prime Minister

Benazir Bhutto was helping the Indian Government in crushing Kashmiri freedom movement like she did in the past during Sikh freedom movement.

Addressing a press conference on Tuesday at a local hotel, he said that Indian oppression in Kashmir had risen to alarming proportion during the last three months and Indian forces even penetrated in the Sopore area which was known to be the fort of the freedom fighters.

He said that Indian attacks on exact target showed that Indian forces got specific information.

Keeping in view the prevailing situation and the prime minister's recent 'confession' regarding her help to Rajiv Gandhi to crush the Sikh movement in the East Punjab, one could suspect that she was also helping the present Indian government in connection with the freedom movement in Kashmir, Nawaz alleged.

Nawaz Sharif has charged that the prime minister was 'a security risk' for Pakistan. "Following the confession of the prime minister in a BBC interview last week that she helped former Indian premier late Rajiv Gandhi against the Sikh movement in the Indian Punjab, she has become a security risk for the country" he said.

Nawaz Sharif said the prime minister must make her position clear to the nation in this matter as it was more serious an issue than the Watergate affair. He said the cause of Pakistan has been compromised by the prime minister.

The PML-N [Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz] chief said that India never helped Pakistan in our hours of need nor it fulfilled promises made to the Kashmiri people. In fact India was responsible for the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971. Moreover, Indian intelligence agency RAW [Research and Analysis Wing] has been working to weaken Pakistan, he added.

He said that prime minister has been sidetracking the main issue and did not answered the questions asked in his February 19 letter to her.

He questioned as to which principle made it binding for Pakistan to help its enemy and added that those who demolished Babri Mosque deserved no help.

"I will take her to the court of the people," said Nawaz.

Replying to a question whether he would bring all these things into the notice of the president and the chief of army staff he said that he would keep on playing his national, constitutional, legal and moral duty.

He said that his party would consider withdrawing its members from the Kashmir Committee of the National Assembly keeping in view the "government's lukewarm attitude over the issue." He said he would strive for protecting the interests of the country and would not hesitate in taking any legal and constitutional step towards this end.